More Ideas ♥ More Tips ♥ More Style What's inside matters most... Britain's Bestselling Homes Magazine **SEPTEMBER 2015** The **STORAGE ISSUE** ♥ Built-In & Bespoke ♥ Modular Systems **♥** Clever Furniture ♥ Small-Storage INSPIRING Essentials New On The ideas inside! High Street DESIGN SCHOOL TAKE OUR PATTERN **MASTERCLASS** Student-Proof + CREATE STYLISH Laptops KIDS' ROOMS Quick & Easy Bakes our space Stealideas from... 2 Wow Extensions 3 Super-Sized Kitchens Storage-Packed Homes 🗸 2 Budget-Luxe Bathrooms



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MAKING SPACE MORE VALUABLE

In this issue...

mprepare for the new season ahead by bringing **Scandi style** to a home office (page 10); embrace urban luxe with chic, industrial designs (page 18) and discover how to **decorate with pattern** on page 90. This month, the Ideal Home team has been busy compiling the best **storage solutions**, so calm and order can reign in your home once more. Find **family friendly** storage ideas for every room (page 78); see how one

family seamlessly incorporated **bespoke storage** into their compact flat (page 114) and check out our

essential edit of smart products that make staying tidy easy on page 138.
Let's banish the clutter for good!



READ THIS ON YOUR TABLET

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Bring order to

a home office



ON THE COVER VOLUME 191 ISSUE 1

Be inspired by the best of the high street with our favourite finds

From graphic prints to dainty florals, discover how to be a pattern pro

> Liven up a kid's bedroom with fun-filled fabrics and wallpapers

Find decorating ideas inside five readers' homes



Make the most of your space with these clever storage solutions

Take a look at the top tech buys for getting ready to go back to school

Whip up tear-andshare treats with tempting traybakes

See how five readers reinvented their kitchens and bathrooms

STYLING SARITA SHARMA PHOTOGRAPH DOMINIC BLACKMORE



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BE INSPIRED AT HARVEYS

Toulouse painted round extending table with slatted chairs from £795, large sideboard from £395, and corner display unit from £429.

harveysfurniture.co.uk





My to-do list for September

The things I'll be planning, doing and shopping for this month

uch as I love summer, I always look forward to the feeling of transition and new beginnings that September brings...

GETTING COLD FEET I know summer's on the wane when I start wearing socks in bed again. As someone who always seems to have icy toes, there's a brief window between June and September when the bed socks are cast aside (although if the summer is particularly 'British', that might not happen at all). I discovered the Holy Grail of bed socks in January and I'm glad to see they're still available, and in more colours. too: washable cashmere from Marks & Spencer, they're a guilty pleasure at £30 a pair, but - ooh - are they a treat (especially if you've had your heels on). THE GREAT ANNUAL CLEAR-OUT

Rooting in my sock drawer for the first time in a while or turning out the understairs cupboard to find the slippers I kicked off some time in May and haven't seen since, usually initiates a frenzy of reorganisation. What Ma Richmond calls 'the urge to purge' possesses me and I'll spend a weekend chucking out chipped mugs, checking tights for holes and marking anything that doesn't move fast enough with my Dymo label maker (a life essential for control freaks everywhere). The only area to escape a thorough going-over will be my bedside cabinets, which have been

claimed by two of the littlest Richmonds as their own. They use them as hiding places for their most precious belongings (Mr Men books, plastic tiaras, etc), to protect them from their baby sister, sometimes fondly known as 'Captain Destructo'. MAKING LISTS All this activity usually results in a flurry of list-making: replacement things to buy;

stuff that needs fixing in

the house; ideas for Christmas gifts (I start early!); storage needs identified. Storage is a hot topic of conversation around the Ideal Home office – so much so that we've compiled our ultimate edit for this issue. It features many of the team's personal picks, although we didn't have enough pages for all our favourites - including these metal trunks from Cox & Cox (right) that I'm going to order for my overflow of 'mummigans' (my brother-in-law's name for the long, drapey cardies I seem to favour). Take a look - it's on page 138. You might find something you didn't know you needed!



Vanessa Richmond, Acting Editor



HELLO, WE'RE IDEAL HOME!

Together, we are a team of... multitasking mums, independents, wise empty-nesters, single ladies ('all the single ladies...'), attached ladies, fierce Millennials, mellow mid-lifers, property owners, free spirits, animal lovers, star bakers, crafters, DIY champions, health nuts, sofa slobs, geeks and goddesses... but, above all, we're passionate home makers. Nice to meet you!

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IDEAL HOME opping Spy



See Acting Style Editor Michela's edit of what's in the shops this month

Sharp styling Ideal for keen crafters Iron and brass-plated scissors, £13.80, House Doctor range, Sisters Guild



style Choose from five colours Five-drawer unit in Chalk, £70, Bisley range, John Lewis

File in

Keep it together Pretty and practical Gold numbered bulldog clips, £8.50 for 10,

Papermash

Light fantastic Good task lighting is a must at a desk Trumpet lamp in green,

£195, Folklore

For night owls Working late? Stay warm as it gets cooler Corona grey and blue throw, £90, Luma

MOOD OF THE MOMENT.

Back to school

Summer is fading and we've got that excited new-term feeling, so polish your shoes, sharpen your pencils and get your affairs in order!

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN. TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



Desk tidy certified wood

Made from FSC-Maple pencil pot, £20, Another Country

Madu

Brush off

Designed to

clean both keys

and screen

Computer brush, £20, Labour and Wait

Old school Retro style in American white oak Stockholm desk dressing table. £299, Tesco Direct Neat as a pin Keeps tape and string tidy Giant gold safety pin (52cm long), £19.99, Papermash

Tea run **Expect colleagues** to covet this two-tone mug Koichi mug, £19, Toast







are removable Dania letter tray, £99, Skagerak



True blue Add cheer with a vase of flowers Blue bubble glass vase, £13.75, Berry Red







GET THE LOOK IN 3 BUYS Farmhouse kitchen





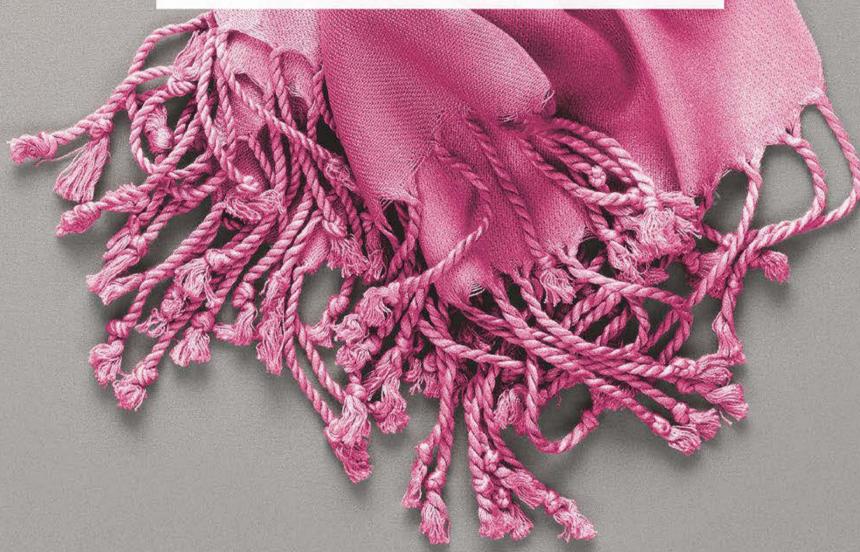
Butcher's block and storage in one Kitchen station (H90cm x W80cm x D65cm), Within Home







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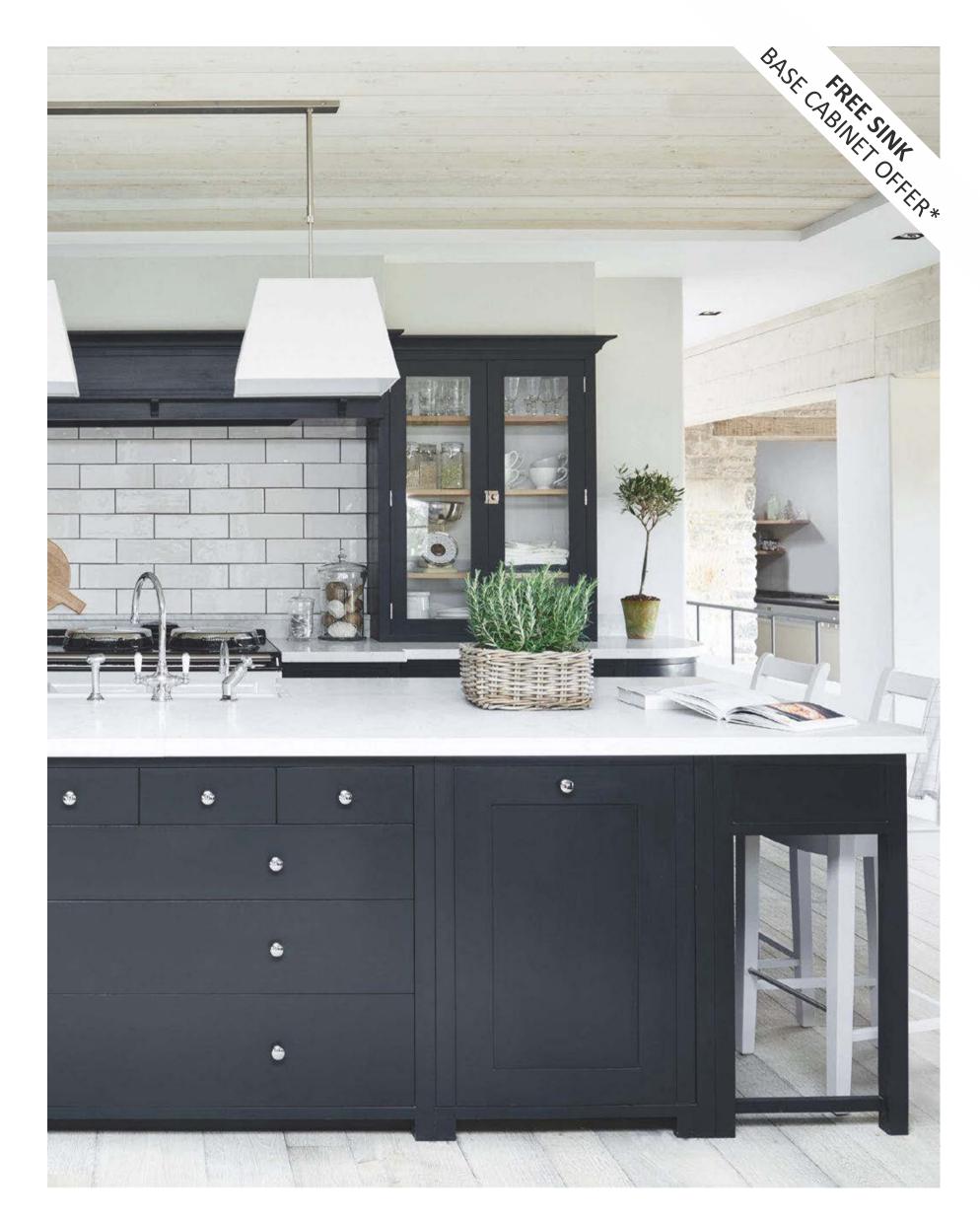


velvet for a touch of luxe



THE STORY SO FAR From wall hooks to entire modular systems, furniture designers are redefining storage as something to admire rather than just a practical necessity. And with the need for multi-use spaces more pressing than ever, why not make a feature out of what can't be hidden away? WHERE WE'VE SEEN IT The bespoke wall systems at Brilliant Project can be adapted to suit your space and style, and the modular shelving at String offers lots of flexibility, from a single shelf to a whole wall of drawers, cupboards and even desks. Bethan Gray's Genevieve hanging rail and Normann Copenhagen's Toj are woodframed upgrades of the metal clothes rail. LATEST RELEASES Wooden pegboards are back - find them at Kreis Design, Block and Kukka - and for unusual shelving, check out the Gridy Fungi and Cage shelves at Menu. Skagerak has addressed compact living with the Cutter mini wardrobe, while the Zutik by Alki is a horizontal oak beam to which you can add or take away components as needed.





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3 of the best **PLANT POTS**



Show your metal Copper accents add glamour Copper plant pot, Mia Fleur



Cunning disguise Dress up any old plant pot Dot Dash print storage pot in Indigo, Bohemia Design



Galvanised finish This comes ready aged Metal plant pot, H&M





IDEAL GREAT DEAL

Get the look whatever your budget



Minimalist design Top the trend charts with this marble and brass model Marble wall clock, Menu range, Heal's

Against the grain Cool and contemporary, with slim silver hands Marble wall clock, Laura Ashley





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Get the look whatever your budget







Find more luxe loft style on the high street

Love this trend? Whether you want to try a lot of it or a little, here's where to shop...

Keep the look pared back and industrial with unfussy pieces in wood, leather, metal and stone. TRY IT IN THE DINING ROOM Barker & Stonehouse's Savannah dining-furniture range balances sleek, contemporary shapes with an aged-oak, salvaged feel.

...OR IN THE BATHROOM

Add character with Dunelm's chic accessories in smoky glass and distressed wood and metal.

...OR IN THE LIVING ROOM

A statement leather chair from House of Fraser has the right chilled-out vintage vibe.



FIND ALL THE DETAILS

FURNITURE AND ACCESSORIES

For a similar **bed**, try the Charlie low-end double bed frame (H129cm x W148cm x L208cm), £645, Barker & Stonehouse. For a similar **bedside table**, try the Industrial kitchen trolley, £249, Rockett St George. ON BED Bed linen in white and grey, from £27 for a pillowcase; wool sham cushions, £49 each; wool throw, £119; all in green/grey; washed sham cushions, £49 each; washed bedspread, £149; both in grey; all Urban range, Lexington Company. For a similar small

vase, try the small bottle vase, from £3.50, Lindsay Interiors. For a similar bottle vase, try the glass vase, £5.99, H&M. ON BEDSIDE TABLE For a similar lamp, try the Truman table lamp, £35, Made.com. For a similar marble pot, try the ceramic bowl, £6.99, H&M. **ON WALL** For similar **prints**, try Bodie and Fou or Rockett St George. **ON** WINDOWSILL For a similar lamp, try the Ned large shaded, £70, BHS, For a similar **photo frame**, try the high-gloss photo frame, £7, Wilko. Brass mist sprayer, £14, Waitrose Home







So solid Concrete is the ultimate urban, outdoors-in material Vase, £75, Raft

Knock on wood Add character with rough-hewn wood

Charlie three-drawer chest, £499. Barker & Stonehouse



Clock watch Opt for a traditional

timepiece on the wall Wooden clock, £15, Wilko







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FEATURE KAREN BRAY

HIGH STREET

Sue Roberts

Meet the design director behind the successful home brands at House of Fraser

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN. TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY



n established high-street name for more than 150 years, House of Fraser has grown from its humble beginnings as a drapery store in Victorian Glasgow into an international department store that sells everything from high-end designer fashion to quality pieces of furniture. Set up in 1997, the homes department now has a range of brands thanks to the company's design director for home, Sue Roberts, and her team.

Since joining the company in 2004, Sue has developed the portfolio of in-house-designed brands from just one to six - and she's about to launch a seventh. Grav & Willow. 'I started out on the Linea Bed and Bath range and it has grown a lot since then,' she says. 'I've been heavily involved in bringing

all the house brands to life. I'm seen as the brand custodian.'

GET TO KNOW HER SIGNATURE

STYLE Sue works across such a diverse product range that it's difficult to pinpoint her signature style, but she admits to a love of good design, vintage textiles, Fifties classics and a mix of old and new. 'I like to use traditional pieces as a strong base and layer more contemporary items on top,' she says. 'Having studied textiles, I'm definitely more of a fabric person at heart, but these days I get excited about everything from lighting and dinnerware to the glaze on a vase.'

The new Gray & Willow range, which launches in store in September, is a personal favourite of Sue's. 'It's something I've been wanting to do for a while,' she says. 'Its got a Scandi feel



60-SECOND BIOGRAPHY

in Consett. County Durham, Sue moved to Darlington when she was three. She studied Textile and Pattern Design at Cleveland College of Art and Design. Her first job was as a freelance textile designer.

Sue moved to

London in 1997

Born in 1972

Marks & Spencer. M She joined House of Fraser in 2004 and has since launched seven home brands. The most recent, Gray & Willow, goes on sale in September. ■ Sue lives with her husband, lack and their children, Albie, four, and Wren, one.

and worked for

and is inspired by relaxed, modern living. It definitely chimes with my own personal style.'

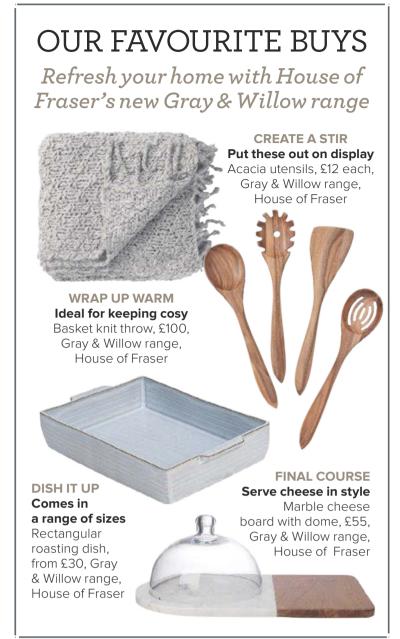
THE WOMAN BEHIND THE LOOK

Brought up in northeast England, Sue has fond memories of spending time sewing and knitting with her mother. 'My mum was always on the sewing machine and I really enjoyed making things with her,' she says. 'I've





Being involved in the launch of so many house brands in such a short space of time has been an amazing opportunity



always loved embroidery and spent a lot of time drawing, too.'

Sue did A-level Art and a foundation course before studying Textile and Pattern Design at Cleveland College of Art and Design. 'When I left college, I rented a studio in an art centre and worked as a freelance textile designer for nearly four years,' she says. 'There wasn't a strong design industry up north, so I came to London in 1997. I got a job with the lingerie team at Marks & Spencer and became one of their fabric researchers. I visited mills and yarn fairs with the design team, working out what the emerging trends would be and which fabrics would be popular. It was a great experience.'

Sue joined House of Fraser initially as a design co-ordinator. 'When I was growing up, House of Fraser was the only big department store near where I lived, so I was quite familiar with the brand,' she says. Now she and her team are responsible for the home brands and all product development. 'Working with such a variety of products means

that lots of different themes need to be brought together, so we travel quite a lot to experience different cultures and to visit trade shows and mills,' says Sue. 'We look at what's happening on the high street and carry out market research. We also buy vintage pieces each season and develop them into new designs. We're really fortunate to be able to design a lot more in house now - I think it's made a huge difference to the success of the brands.'

The biggest challenge for Sue is maintaining her home-life balance. 'I've got two small children and, with all the travelling, it can be a lot to juggle, but being involved in the launch of so many house brands in such a short space of time has been an amazing opportunity,' she says. THE SUE ROBERTS PHILOSOPHY

'Invest in good design, the right flooring, top-quality paint and classic pieces. This is the base on which to layer seasonal interest. Then, when you want to update your scheme, you can just change the final layer.'

Steal her style SOFT NEUTRALS

 $Create\ a\ calm$, contemporaryliving space with Sue's gentle palette of soothing shades

USE THEM as a backdrop in living and dining areas to create a laid-back ambience that's perfect for relaxing in. MIX THEM with furniture in natural wood tones and pale grey or white accessories for a Scandi-inspired feel. TRY THEM on exposed floorboards, as an alternative to plain white.











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BOUGHT FOR £430,000 | £48,500 |

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THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom, pavilion-style, Sixties bungalow, near Edinburgh. The owners bought it in 2013.

WHAT IT COST

| £10,000 |
|---------|
| £4,000 |
| £20,000 |
| £8,500 |
| £6,000 |
| £48,500 |
| |

WHO LIVES HERE

Irina and Thomas Rickerby, with their eight-month-old daughter,

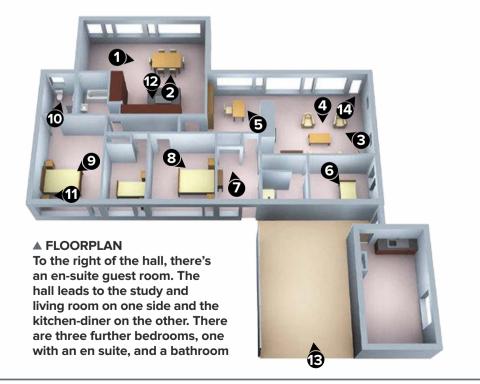
Ruby. Irina works in banking and Thomas is a business development and sustainability consultant.

THE LOOK

Modernist inspired, with white walls, mid-century-modern furniture and distinctive artwork.

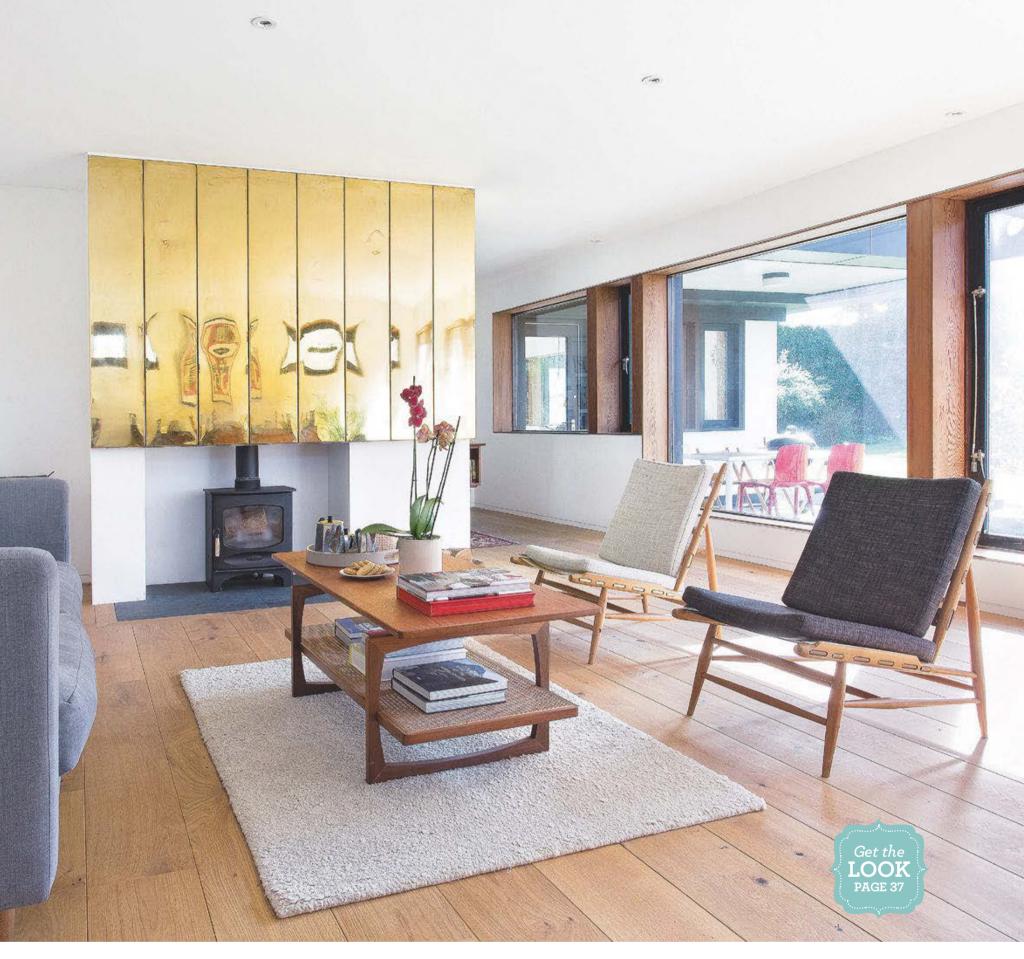
LESSONS LEARNED

66 Any experienced renovator will advise you to have a good contingency fund and be prepared to spend on quality materials, particularly on surfaces that are on display. 🤊









estled in a quiet enclave in a pretty coastal village close to Edinburgh, this striking house marked the end of a long search for Irina and Tom Rickerby. 'After nearly two years of looking for the right property, we knew we were onto something special when we finally saw this,' says Irina.

Something of a historical gem, the house was designed by renowned Scottish firm Morris and Steedman Associates, which was a UK pioneer of the post-war modern architecture seen in America during the Fifties and Sixties. 'Our house came with an attractive architectural heritage, even if the interior

fittings and fixtures were starting to look a little bit dated,' says Tom. 'We were delighted when our offer was accepted.'

The couple bought the house in early 2013 and rented elsewhere for four months while the worst of the work was being done. Their brief was simple: bring it up to date in a fresh, modern way, while being sympathetic and complementary to the original Modernist design philosophy. 'We were fortunate in that my cousin, Jamie, is a property developer and runs a very tight ship,' says Tom. 'He projectmanaged the work using his own team, which meant the project was relatively problem-free.'

The building was taken back to its basic shell to give as much flexibility to the new interior ->

3 Living room

The copper panelling is an original feature. 'We used it as a starting point for the décor, adding subtle, warm metallic touches throughout the house,' says Tom

Wood-burning stove, £650, Charnwood. Model 427 lounge chairs, from £250 each, Chairs+Skyscrapers



4 Living room 'Mid-century furniture is great to collect,'
says Tom. 'We bought
a few pieces and our
existing furniture just looked wrong, so we kept on buying'
For a similar lounge chair with ottoman, try the Eames style, £795, Vita Interiors

5 Study The Danish desk and

from Bra Bohag – a mid-century-furniture shop in Edinburgh
For similar shelving, try the Jai wide ladder unit, £170, Habitat. For a similar lamp, try the Lloytron in antique brass, £19.99, Homebase

vintage lamp are both





layout as possible. 'Cooking and entertaining are important to us, so we wanted to create a sociable, open-plan living space,' says Irina.

Starting almost from scratch gave the couple the opportunity to insulate and rewire throughout. They also installed LED lighting. 'Making the house energy efficient was an important part of the renovation, so we also replaced the old hot-air heating system with a modern, efficient wet system,' says Tom.

The whole project was done amazingly quickly, thanks mainly to Jamie and his team's efficiency. 'However, it's also testament to the quality of the workmanship put in when the house was originally built,' says Tom.

The Rickerbys both have a keen interest in design and a knowledge of mid-century furniture and architecture, which they explored fully to ensure the house was appropriately

furnished and accessorised. Tom took on most of the research and would present Irina with his three favourite options for every item. 'He's a self-confessed control freak,' says Irina, who found that out the hard way, when she once bought some cushions without consulting him. 'We're back on speaking terms now though!'

Keen to make a feature of the original cedar-framed windows throughout the house. Tom restored them to their natural-wood finish himself. 'It started out as a labour of love, but two months of endless sanding nearly broke me,' he says. 'It was worth it in the end, but I'm not sure I would do it again.'

Decoratively, the couple went for a clean, pared-back look, with a nod to Mad Men - the TV show about New York's advertising industry in the Sixties. 'We like the purity and minimalism of white,' says Irina. 'It accentuates the space ->

6 Guest bedroom

With its unfussy décor, minimal furnishing and floor-to-ceiling windows, this room is a lovely retreat for friends and family For a similar bed, try the

Annabel, £329, Marks & Spencer. Nyponros double duvet cover set, £25, Ikea

7 Hallway

A teak mid-century console table is a handy place to keep keys and post hidden from view

For a similar desk, try eBay. Cucù clock with bird, £250, Diamantini & Domeniconi range, John Lewis





and light, and provides a great backdrop for our artwork. It also brings out the natural textures in the house's wooden elements.'

The new layout flows seamlessly from space to space, incorporating a contemporary finish with a mix of modern and mid-century furniture and some stunning original features, such as the copper-panelling installation surrounding the fireplace. The house is the perfect backdrop for the couple's neat furnishings and many individual pieces.

'We travel a lot and always try to pick up something for the house while we are away,' says Irina, who comes from Russia. 'We are quite selective over what we display, and try to avoid accumulating lots of "stuff".' Instead, the pair surround themselves with a distilled collection of objects that tells a story and holds emotional and aesthetic value.

Even the front-door number has a story. 'On Google, I found a website called dwr.com,' says Irina. 'It was selling metal house numbers in the font that one of our favourite architects, Richard Neutra, had created to number his own houses. We both agree that they make the perfect finishing touch to our home.'

9 Main bedroom

Even the main bedroom channels a chic, Modernist vibe thanks to its smart bedside tables and design-led wall lights Laslo bed, £895, Sofa.com. Tolomeo lamps, £242 each, Artemide range, AmbienteDirect.com

• En suite

'Our bathroom was

originally completely clad in pine, so we decided to put in the cedar feature wall as an homage to this,' says Tom. 'It's one of my favourite things in the house' For similar cladding, try the Western red cedar No2 shiplap cladding, from £49.73 per sq m, Silva Timber Products



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Our home has adapted with us'

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BOUGHT FOR

NOW WORTH

£630,000 | £150,000 | £1.8 million

THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom, Victorian terraced house in west London, bought in 2005.

WHAT IT COST

| Building work | £83,000 |
|---------------|----------|
| Kitchen | £30,000 |
| Roof, windows | |
| and garden | £37,000 |
| TOTAL | £150,000 |

WHO LIVES HERE

Celine Lynch and her husband, Jim Prior, with their children, Maisie, 15, and Rory, 10. Celine owns online interiors store homeaddress.co and Jim works for a design and branding agency.

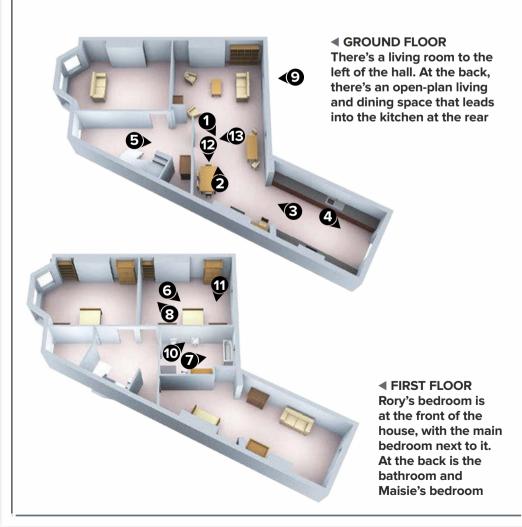
THE LOOK

Cool and calm, with a palette of soft greys and neutrals, elegant displays of artwork and a mix of traditional and mid-century pieces.



LESSONS LEARNED

66 I discovered a combination of slab units and granite worktops was best to create a timeless look in the kitchen. ??









hen Celine and Jim Lynch bought their four-bedroom, end-ofterrace house in west London a decade ago, they knew they had a big job on their hands. 'This building had been a rooming house and it was a mess, but the advantage was that we could rip everything out and start from scratch,' says Celine. 'I'd renovated our two previous homes, so I had a pretty good idea of what would be involved.' The house occupies a wedge-shaped

plot, which the previous owners had taken advantage of by adding a rear extension at an angle to the original property. 'When we bought the house, the extension was used as a dining room, but I transposed the kitchen and dining areas, and demolished the wall that divided it from the rear living room, creating one big living space,' says Celine.

The front and rear living rooms had been knocked through by a past owner, but Celine reinstated that wall to create a separate room at the front of the house. 'I used to use it as an office, but now it's a retreat for our children, Maisie and Rory, and their friends,' she says. 'I think it's important that a house adapts to a family's changing needs - a harmonious home has to work for each of us.'

Celine has decorated the whole house in understated colours, adding texture with ->

3 Kitchen

Celine teamed modern slab units with granite worktops for a simple, fuss-free look. Parquet flooring adds character and timeless appeal

For similar slab units, try the Metod with Häggeby doors, from £54 for a W600mm base unit: Bekväm step stool, £13; both Ikea







4 Kitchen

The couple replaced the house's UPVC glazing with traditional French windows that lead out to the rear garden. The appliances are positioned in a tall bank of units at one end of the kitchen For a similar fridge-freezer, try the E442BRX4, £1,149, Fisher & Paykel range,

John Lewis

5 Hallway
A combination of off-white walls, a simple mirror and an antique chest of drawers painted in chalky white creates understated style

For a similar mirror, try the dark birch black square wall mirror, £65, Habitat





furniture and accessories. In the open-plan kitchen, living and dining area, she used a pale putty shade on the walls, painting the wooden panelling in the dining area in a slightly darker tone. She has also expertly mixed different styles of furniture; a hand-crafted George Smith sofa sits opposite two classic armchairs in the living area, while at the other end, vintage Arne Jacobsen chairs, bought on eBay, are arranged around the dining table.

Celine has made a feature of open shelving in the living area, with a wall of storage filled with books and magazines creating a homely feel. The alcoves to either side of the wood burner in the dining area have also been put to good use, with shelves on one side providing storage for wine bottles and logs, and a desk on the other side creating a small area for working at a laptop, with shelves above and below keeping everything organised.

'It helps keep the dining table clear of clutter and it means I can quickly check my emails without having to disappear upstairs to my office,' says Celine, who runs online interiors store Home Address (homeaddress.co). 'I source a range of beautifully made products for the home. I've chosen items that I think add warmth and personality.'

Celine has an eye for detail, so when it came to choosing a new kitchen for her home, she







'On summer evenings, it's lovely to have drinks around the table outside the living room and then move over to the terrace to eat alfresco'

had firm ideas regarding the design. Keen to create a look that is timeless and practical, Celine selected off-white slab-front units and dark granite worktops. The hard-wearing finishes of the stainless-steel appliances and granite worktops are balanced by Celine's collection of decorative artwork and photographs displayed in the dining area.

Base units are fitted along either side of the kitchen in a galley-style format, with double ovens and a fridge-freezer housed in tall cabinets at the far end. On the rear wall, French windows lead outside. 'The garden extends across the width of the house, which is wider at the back than at the front,' says Celine.

The family have two outdoor dining areas, one on the terrace outside the kitchen and another adjacent to the French windows that lead out from the living area. 'On summer evenings, it's lovely to have drinks around the table outside the living room and then move over to the terrace to eat alfresco,' says Celine.

On the first floor, Celine has stripped out all traces of the property's past life as a rooming house. 'The one thing that was worth saving was a claw-foot bath, but everything else had to go,' she says. 'I didn't want a clinical-style bathroom, so I chose a lilac shade for the walls and sourced traditional sanitaryware to complement the bath. A voile blind softens the look without cutting out natural light.'

Celine chose similar muted tones for the main bedroom, where a metallic floral wallpaper contrasts with white paintwork. Plantation shutters keep the look simple and uncluttered, while an upholstered headboard adds a touch of luxury. 'I had visions of lying back in comfort and catching up on my reading, but most nights I'm asleep before my head touches the pillow,' says Celine. @

9 Garden

French windows in the living area open onto an outdoor terrace. A wrought-iron table and chairs makes an inviting spot for a drink at the end of the day For a similar outdoor dining set, try the ornate steel bistro set. £39.99 for a table and two chairs, Greenfingers Trading

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ASK CELINE

W WHAT DO YOU LOVE

HOME? 'That the space and

M DESCRIBE YOUR STYLE IN FIVE WORDS 'Elegant, considered, sensual, practical and authentic.'

FAVOURITE HOME BUY? 'The wood burner – there's nothing quite like a fire to make you feel at home.'

FAVOURITE INTERIORS

WHAT'S YOUR

WHAT'S YOUR

furniture suit the needs of

the whole family, without compromising on aesthetics, such as our elegant sofa that's also sturdy enough for the kids to bounce on.'

MOST ABOUT YOUR

Get Celine's look

Get a hotel-chic bedroom with luxe furnishings and a warm coffee-and-cream colour scheme

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'We had big ideas for our small space'

Outgrown your home? Think about extending – Anna Tobin and Justin Plasett did just that with great results

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BOUGHT FOR

£320,000 £106,515

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THE PROPERTY

A three-bedroom, Edwardian cottage in Barnet, north London. The owners bought the property in August 2003.

WHAT IT COST

| Building and decorating | g£90,000 |
|-------------------------|----------|
| Flooring | £5,000 |
| Furniture | £11,515 |
| TOTAL | £106.515 |

WHO LIVES HERE

Anna Tobin and Justin Plasett, with their daughters, Ella, 10, and, Lily,

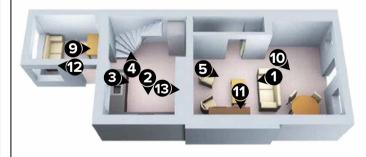
seven. Anna is a journalist and Justin is a recruitment consultant.

THE LOOK

Bright and cheerful, with colourful furnishings and accessories against white walls and wooden flooring.

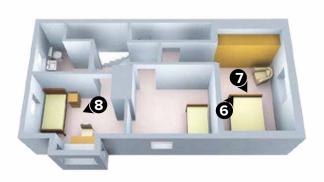
LESSONS LEARNED

66 Being granted planning permission doesn't give you free rein to build. The Party Wall Award can take years to reach agreement on with your neighbours, as we discovered. ">>



■ GROUND FLOOR The front door opens into the . living/dining room, which leads into the kitchen. A study-cum-playroom can be found at the back of the house

FIRST FLOOR ▶ Upstairs are the children's rooms, the main bedroom with its small en-suite shower room, and the family bathroom







HOME IDEAS Edwardian cottage

nna Tobin and Justin Plasett bought their two-bedroom cottage in Barnet, north London, over a decade ago. 'We could have gone for a sensible four-bedroom, newbuild house with lots of rooms in one of the many developments just outside London,' says Anna. 'Instead, for the same amount of money, we opted for this tiny, run-down cottage, which didn't have a hallway, let alone much else.'

Soon after they moved in, baby Ella arrived, and when Anna became pregnant with Lily a few years later, they put the house on the market, as they were already outgrowing the property. 'It was on the market for six months and everyone who viewed it said the same thing: they loved it, the price wasn't a problem, but it was too small and wasn't suited to 21st-century living,' says Anna. 'So we decided to apply for planning permission to move the front of the house forward by 3m to create more living space downstairs and a third bedroom upstairs.' A rear extension wasn't an option because that part of the house can be seen from the nearby conservation area.

What they soon discovered, however, is that having permission isn't always all you need. 'Within days, our neighbours started a legal battle against the work, involving the Party Wall Act,' says Anna. 'It took five years of expensive legal advice before we could get going.'

During this time, the family had no choice but to adapt to living in a tiny space. Lily ->



3 Kitchen

When the girls have their friends over, the drop-leaf table is pulled out to seat up to six Suki folding dining table, £195, Habitat. Retro chairs, £70 each, Graham and Green. Teacups, £10 each, Anthropologie

4 Kitchen

'We were so lucky that our builders worked out a way for the fridge-freezer and larder unit to go under the stairs, where our TV used to be, and I found some wicker basket drawers online that fit exactly,' says Anna Wicker basket drawers. £48 each, Buller



slept in the same room as her parents for a year, then moved in with Ella. 'As Ella's room was cramped, we had to move her wardrobe into our room to make space for Lily's cot,' says Anna. 'Downstairs, the buggy took over the kitchen and, in the evenings, we had to look through the clothes airer to watch TV!'

Once they had permission to go ahead, the couple hired architects Brill & Owen, whose staff have specialist knowledge of building in a conservation area, and building firm Edwards Bros, who made the project run like a dream. With help from the two companies, the pair decided to rip out the kitchen, refit it in the

centre of the house and have an open-plan living and dining room where the old kitchen used to be. 'The windows were replaced in the extended walls and the fireplace was repositioned in the new living area,' says Anna. 'We also had our sofa re-covered and the dining room curtains turned into blinds for the study.'

As it's still a relatively small house, Anna painted the walls white to maximise the light. 'However, I've used bright, contrasting shades to ensure maximum vibrancy,' she says. In the main bedroom, the look has been toned down to create a feeling of calm. Here, white and taupe are the base colours and these are

'I took time to figure out how the house would work. I had to ensure that every part of every room would have a purpose'





6 Main bedroom
A local company that a friend recommended built the fitted wardrobes. 'I was delighted that they could incorporate walnut into the design to tie them in with the beams and the bed,' says Anna. The chair is a vintage Parker Knoll that the couple had reupholstered Fitted wardrobes, £4,000, Bedroom Design Studios



7 Main bedroom

'Previously, we'd had chunky cabinets for the girls' clothes by our bed, so it was a luxury to choose bedside tables for their looks rather than how much they could hold,' says Anna Bumble side tables, £65 each, Habitat. Piet mirror, £215, Graham and Green.

Irisa cushion (on bed),

£25; beaded cushions, £25 each; all John Lewis





8 Ella's bedroom

The school desk was bought on eBay. 'It had 1945 graffiti and ancient gum stuck on it,' says Anna, who changed the existing cream carpet for a more practical mink one Mink Strand carpet, £48.10 per sq m, Brintons range, Quality Carpets Direct

9 Study

Doubling as a playroom, the study has shelving for the girls' toys and board games. The ceiling was removed here to expose the beams, which were stained to match the floor For a similar chair, try the natural rattan, £269, Bloomingville range, Amara

warmed up with splashes of the burnt orange and bubble-gum pink that bring life to the rest of the house. 'We decided to sacrifice the loft space here and stained the exposed beams walnut to match the bed and wardrobes, and to make a feature of the pitched roof,' explains Anna. 'The idea was to create a grown-up space away from the bustle of family life, but that's backfired, as our girls tell me that the double-height ceiling and large floor area make it the best place to practise their footie skills.'





Quivie from the Congo

Bitter Orange from Tanzania





Lemon Thyme from Provence

Lemons from Sicily



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THE PROPERTY

A four-bedroom, detached house in the Sheepscombe valley, Gloucestershire. The old bungalow was bought in October 2012 and the new-build house was completed in 2014.

WHAT IT COST

Planning and site services..£77,000 Ground work, structure and brickwork.....£187,000 Roof, glazing and render.....£91,000 First and second fix and external work.....£136,000 Kitchen and bathrooms.....£26,000 TOTAL....£517,000

WHO LIVES HERE

Michelle Johnston, who is a retired financial adviser.

THE LOOK

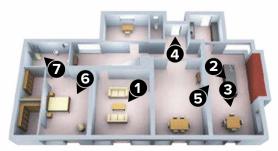
Contemporary, with floor-to-ceiling windows, unfussy, modern décor, an eclectic collection of antique and modern furniture, and colourful soft furnishings.

LESSONS LEARNED

66 You need a proper understanding with your architect before you start, so that each of you knows who is responsible for what. ??

GROUND FLOOR ▶ Leading off the hall, there are three bedrooms, one with an en suite. There's also a bathroom, an entertainment room and a boiler room





▼ FIRST FLOOR

The house is entered from the first floor. The main door is at the back of the house and leads into the hall. On the left is the kitchen-diner and utility room, ahead is the dining room and, to the right, the living room, study, cloakroom and main bedroom with en suite







'I feel very privileged to have found such a site. This is no longer a project, but a home, located in an idyllic setting, that takes care of me'

hen Michelle Johnston retired as a financial services consultant in 2006, she embarked on a new career in property restoration.

Having revamped a Seventies house in Bath using glass and steel to great effect, she started looking for a contemporary property for herself. 'I wanted a modest house with a view,' she says, 'but all I could find were large manor houses or properties that had been extended piecemeal and lacked coherence.'

After years of looking online for her dream home, she came across a tired Thirties bungalow overlooking the stunning Sheepscombe valley in Gloucestershire. 'I already knew the area and

was attracted to the site as it was on a private road, so building work would cause disruption to just a handful of neighbours,' says Michelle, who decided to knock down the old bungalow to make way for her contemporary new-build.

The position was perfect because its sloping site faced northwest and Michelle was aware that, in a house with glazed walls, 'if you face south, you are going to fry by 2pm. Here, the sun hits the front of the house in the afternoon'.

Michelle bought the property in October 2012, then hired an architect and a planning consultant to ensure that all the plans were accepted. 'He emphasised that the top part of the new house should be no higher than the gable height of the old bungalow, so we had to dig down into the hill,' says Michelle, who ->

3 Breakfast area

Steel, leather and glass are perfect materials for the breakfast area, as they reflect the industrial style of the kitchen. Porcelain floor tiles are a sleek, easy-care option Walls painted in Felt 111 flat emulsion, £36 for 2.5ltr, Paint & Paper Library. Fabrica Blanco porcelain floor tiles, £26.33 per sq m, Mandarin Stone. For similar dining chairs, try the Delta, £89 each, John Lewis



4 Entrance hall Because of the sloping site, the entrance is at the rear of the property and the kitchen and living room are on the first floor Troy marble floor tiles, £57.60 per sq m, Mandarin

Stone. Bespoke wall-hung table, £885, Inspired Interiors

6 Kitchen

The glass doors leading out to the patio and a row of windows ensure the room is filled with light. Stools at one end of the island create a handy space for casual meals For similar stools, try the Gloss Coco, £38.50 each, Atlantic Shopping

SMART STORAGE SOLUTIONS

An island is the perfect place for those little luxury extras, such as a prep sink, wine fridge or breakfast bar







6 Main bedroom

The floral feature wall gives the room a more traditional feel. Michelle used the same curtain fabric as in her previous house. 'I loved it so much that, when I used it again, I asked my curtain maker to turn the offcuts into pillowcases,' she says Peony Place wallpaper, £56 per roll, Nina Campbell range, Highclere Interiors

was delighted when planning consent was agreed in January 2013. Four months later, the old existing bungalow was knocked down and the new-build was constructed in three stages, with local site agent Steve Potter overseeing the completion of the property from a shell.

Work finally finished in February 2014 and the result is an impressive house that, as Michelle wanted, emphasises the natural light and the view of the valley. Floor-to-ceiling windows rise up to 7m in some places, glazed panels are featured in several internal doors, windows slide open onto a glass balcony at the front and there's a glass panel in the hall roof, flooding the space with light.

The kitchen is also exactly what Michelle imagined. 'I wanted it to be very modern and to reflect the style of the house, so there are no stand-alone units,' she says. As a keen cook, Michelle required a functional space. Local company, Dajon Interiors, came up with a design that includes a recessed bank of cupboards to hold three ovens, a pantry, a fridge and a freezer, as well as storage, and an island that contains a wine cooler, dishwasher, induction hob and more cupboard space.

When it came to the decorating, Michelle was helped by painter and decorator PS Timbrell. The cool, contemporary grey and black used for the kitchen units, furniture and soft furnishings are broken up by splashes of orange in artwork and cushions, while the bedrooms have a more traditional feel with floral feature walls.

The result is that the house more than lives up to Michelle's expectations. 'I feel very privileged to have found such a site,' she says. 'This is no longer a project, but a home, located in an idyllic setting, that takes care of me.'



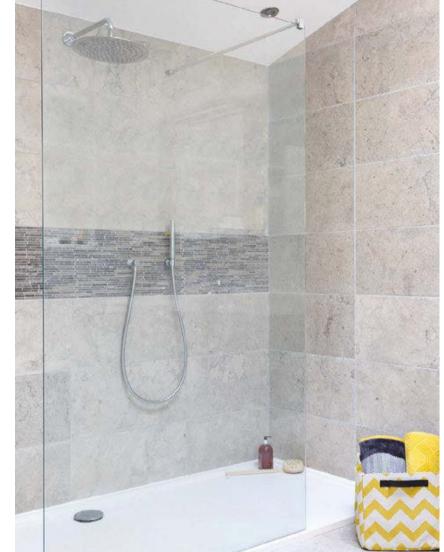
FEATURE PAT GARRATT STYLING SAM WIGHTMAN PHOTOGRAPHS AMANDA TURNER BOX COPY LISA FAZZANI PLANS PERSONA-ID

7 Main en suite

Marble wall tiles and a large showerhead add a sense of luxury to Michelle's bathroom Shower screen, £700, Aqata range; shower valve, Crosswater range; shower head, VADO range; £600 for the set; all Dajon Interiors

3 Guest en suite In a departure from the

house's modern feel, this bathroom has a more classic look thanks to the patterned floor, traditional basin and white metro wall tiles Vanity washstand and taps, £1,600, Imperial Bathrooms range, Dajon Interiors. Encaustic floor tiles, £225 per sq m, Fired Earth









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ASK MICHELLE

WHAT DO YOU LOVE MOST ABOUT YOUR HOME? 'The fact that every opportunity has been taken to bring the outside environment and lots of natural daylight

into all of the rooms.' **M** DESCRIBE YOUR **STYLE IN FIVE WORDS**

'Calm, clean with unfussy lines.'

WHAT'S YOUR FAVOURITE NATIONAL OR ONLINE INTERIORS SHOP AND WHY?

'Julian Chichester, because its design ideas are strong and robust.'

WHAT'S YOUR DECORATING SECRET?

'Use decorators who also understand the creative side of their work.'

WHAT INSPIRED YOUR COLOUR SCHEME?

'I tried to avoid the expense of changing my furniture, so I chose wall colours that would work with all my existing pieces.'



Glassware is an easy way to bring in an accent colour

Pols Potten Pill glass vase in red (H30cm), Δmara



Plaza coffee table (H38cm x W70cm x L130cm), Oka

Figueria Sunburst

cushion, John Lewis



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for your project. We'll show you

how on page 100.

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FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO PAGE 84













THE INSPIRATION YOU NEED

LOVE IT Feel-good Scandi prints can bring an uplifting feel to any room in your home, whether you choose to use energising bold brights or laid-back, muted, mid-century tones.

USE IT wherever you want to add a sense of light-hearted fun. Lively, graphic prints work well in larger rooms that are used for entertaining, such as living rooms and kitchendiners, while kids will love to see

upbeat pattern in a bedroom or playroom. You could even use a cheerful motif-print wallpaper in the hallway to welcome guests as soon as they step through the front door.

WHERE TO BUY IT Hus & Hem has a huge selection of patterned cushions, while the bed linen at Mini Moderns is ideal for an instant Scandi update. For fabrics, check out the graphic designs at Scion and Vanessa Arbuthnott.

Choose your base colour

MID GREY This warm shade creates a soothing blank canvas that works well in any room.

DUCK-EGG BLUE

Team with coral or tangerine accessories for a real pop of colour. **APPLE GREEN** Try

this zingy colour on a feature wall or chimney breast.

> Green Almond matt emulsion, £39 for 2.5ltr. Sanderson

Lamp Room Gray Modern Emulsion, £42 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball

Brighton Absolute Matt Emulsion, £37 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene

Find all the details IN THESE PICTURES

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HALL DECORATION AND FURNITURE Cykel HALL DECORATION AND . Comm. Rubber 111100 wallpaper, £38 per roll, Scion. Rubber 549 95 per roll. studded **flooring** in Peppermint Cream, £49.95 per sq m, Harvey Maria. Norwich runner, £169, WovenGround. Hemnes shoe cabinet, £80, Ikea. Pigeonhole wall shelf and hooks, £80, Great Little Trading Co. **ON/NEAR WALL SHELF** (from top, left to right) Personalised **framed** picture, from £60; child's drawings/messages framed pictures, £65 each; all Sarah & Bendrix. Umbra owl cannister, £15, Debenhams. Notebooks, from £11.50

each; Swedish clogs, from £62.50; all Hedgehog. Tealight **lantern**, £11.95, Orla Kiely range, Wild & Wolf. $\pmb{\mathsf{Vase}}, \mathfrak{L}8, \, \mathsf{Ben} \,\, \mathsf{Di} \,\, \mathsf{Lisi} \,\, \mathsf{Home} \,\, \mathsf{range}, \, \mathsf{Debenhams}. \,\, \mathsf{Tealight}$ lanterns, as before. ON/NEAR SHOE CABINET Hector medium dome **table light**, £150, Original BTC. Cuckoo clock, £49.95, Muji. Owls personal organiser, £16, Paperchase. Rice storage **basket**, £29, Cloudberry Living

KITCHEN-DINER DECORATION AND FURNITURE Levande Saldo wallpaper, £38 per roll; blind made in Lotta Apple, £28 per m; border made in Plains One in Citrus, £30 per m; all Scion. UF1246 flooring, £31.99 per sq m, Arte collection, Quick-Step Buckland bench, from £1,765; Somerton baskets from £145 each; all Neptune. Lance dining table, £150; Jerry dining chairs, £80 each; all Habitat. Padstow sideboard, £499, Marks & Spencer. Shoreditch industrial **ceiling light**, £69, Atkin and Thyme. ON TABLE Tray, £25; Loft Clear vase, £34, LSA International range; both Heal's. Glass, £4, Jane Foster range, Hus & Hem. Vacuum jug, £51, Stelton range, Cloudberry Living. Pasta bowls, £14.50 each; serving bowl, £44, Sophie Conran range; large mat, £9.50; all Ceramica Blue. ON/NEAR BENCH Cushions, from left:

made in Plains One in Aqua and in Wagtail, both £30 $\,$ per m, Scion; Mello Blue, £26; made in Cirkelblomma (front), £22.95 per m; both Hus & Hem; made in Plains One in Citrus (back), as before; made in Brick Aluminium, £43 per m, Kirkby Design; Mello Coral, £26, Hus & Hem; made in Plains One in Powder Blue, £30 per m; made in Hetsa Apple, £28 per m; made in Plains One in Citrus, as before; all Scion; Mello Yellow, £26, Hus & Hem. Rice storage basket, as before. Ants runner in Warm Grey (in basket), from £59; Honey Pale Turquoise runner (in basket), from £62; both Pappelina range, Cloudberry Living. ON WALL (from left) British Coast prints, £90 for three, Bold & Noble. Ribba frames, from £6 each; Ribba picture ledges, £7.90 each; all Ikea. **Pegboards**, from £25 each, Block. ON PEGBOARDS (from top left) Twine, from £2.95 each; bobbins, from £2.95 each; all Wild & Wolf. Copper hook rack, £38, Marquis & Dawe. Scissors, £1.75, Paperchase. Familjen **cups**, £28 for two, Isak range, Cloudberry Living. **Twine**, as before. **ON SIDEBOARD** Jive Retro DAB **radio**, £75, Kitsound range, Tesco Direct. **String in a tin**, £9.95, Wild & Wolf. **ON WINDOWSILL** Mervyn Gers **jug**, £30, Heal's. For a similar vase, try a selection, LSA International



LIVING ROOM DECORATION AND FURNITURE Walls painted in Inox 224 Intelligent Matt Emulsion, £43.50 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene. Sisal Fine Boucle **flooring** in Fossil, from £36.50 per sq m, Kersaint Cobb & Company. Coates stripe rug, £95, Habitat. Great White coffee table, £395, Loaf. Quartz Chaise sofa in Grey, £998, DFS. Hemnes cabinets with glass doors, £250 each; Hemnes glass-door cabinets with three drawers, £300 each; all Ikea. Drew side table, £40, Habitat. ON COFFEE TABLE Acrylic

one-drawer **case**, £6.95; coloured **pencils**, £2.95 for 12; all Muji. Iris fruit bowl, from £35, Heal's. Rectangular tray, £50, Kreis Design. Bird mugs, from £9.95 each, Jane Foster range, Hus & Hem. Jars Jardin side plate, £16.50, Ceramica Blue. Durdle vase, £18, Habitat. ON SIDE TABLE Copper and white lamp, £99, Marquis & Dawe range, Notonthehighstreet.com. Picture frame, £8, Ben Di Lisi Home range, Debenhams. Pretty bowl, from £6, Ceramica Blue. ON SOFA Cushions, from left: made in Cykel, £28 per m, Scion; Mello Coral, £26, Hus & Hem; Plains One in Wagtail and Aqua, both £30 per m, Scion; Spira Juline, £19.95, Hus & Hem; made in Cykel, as before; made in Hetsa Seaglass/Chalk/ Mink, £28 per m, Scion; Spira Juline, as before. ON **CABINETS** Paper **storage baskets**, £30 for three, Cox & Cox. Sylt **throw** (in box), £65, David Fussenegger range, Heal's. IN CABINETS (from top left in each cabinet) Orange photo box, £9; large Alva storage box, £13.95; both The Holding Company. Lotta vase lantern, £40, LSA International range, Heal's. Arch lever files, £3 each, Paperchase. 'Bonjour' poster, £18, Sarah & Bendrix. Ribba frame, £6, Ikea. Acrylic stand, £12.95 pencils, £2.95 for 12; all Muji. Fiona magazine files, £11 for three, The Holding Company. Candle holder,

£25, Ben Di Lisi Home range, Debenhams. Owl money box, £27, Ceramica Blue. Three-drawer slim organiser, £24.95, The Holding Company. Acrylic stand; pencils; as before. Inge white boxes, from £13 each, The Holding Company. Spearmint Love bowls, from £8 each, Ceramica Blue. Glass bottles, £27 for two, Very. Magazine files, £11 each, The Holding Company. Decorative vase, £35 for three, Very. Pretty bowl, as before. Large Alva storage box, as before. Aggie tall pink reactive vase, £30, Habitat. Arch lever files, as before. Acrylic two-drawer narrow box, £7.95, Muji. Fox **money box**, £27, Ceramica Blue. Spearmint Love bowl, as before. Small Alva storage box, £10.95, The Holding Company. Acrylic two-drawer wide case, £10.95, Muji. Small Pretty **bowl**, as before. Teal vase, £32, Betty Jackson.Black range, Debenhams. Ribba picture frame, £2.25, Ikea. Inge white box, as before. ON WALL 'Birds Around Britain' print, £45, Bold & Noble. Ribba frame, £12, Ikea. ON FLOOR Muuto storage baskets, £63.99 each, Smallable. INSIDE BASKETS Natural guitar, £21; retro Ludo game, £8.60; both Hedgehog. Bear cushion, £31.59, Ferm Living range, Smallable. Sylt **throw**, £65, David Fussenegger range, Heal's



FURNITURE Walls painted in Gentle Sky **DEDROOM DECORATION AND** 102 Intelligent Matt Emulsion, £43.50 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene. UF1235 **flooring**, £27.99 per sq m, Perspective collection, Quick-Step. Octo rug, £95, Habitat. For a similar peg rail, try the hanging rack, £35, Croft Collection range, John Lewis. Linus high bed, £499; Linus **stool**, £49; both Made.com. **Storage bench**, £165, All Things Brighton Beautiful. Wall-mounted **pegboard**,

from £198, Kreis Design. ON/NEAR BENCH Mello Coral and Mello Blue cushions, £26 each, Hus & Hem. Stacking toy box, £27, Great Little Trading Co. ON DESK Magnetic memo board, £13.99, Retreat Home range, Notonthehighstreet.com. ON/NEAR BED Folk pillowcase, £39 for a single set with duvet cover, Made. com. Kossan quilt cover and pillowcase, £13, Ikea. Bear **cushion**, £31.59, Ferm Living range, Smallable. Rice storage **baskets**, £29 each, Cloudberry Living. For a similar **cushion**, try the Village, £18.70, Made In Design. ON MEMO BOARD Pipkin framed animal prints, £39 each, Made.com. Apple memo notepad, £4.90, Hedgehog. ON WALL Guitar, £21; bow and arrow set, £10; all Hedgehog. Fabric bags, made in (from left): Cirkelblomma, £22.95 per m; Klippan Tulip; Klippan Bird; both £29.95 per m; all Hus & Hem. Gesso doll's house shelf, £65, Cox & Cox. 'Me and My Animal Friends' set, £25, Sarah & Bendrix. Pipkin animal prints, as before. Darcy clock, £25, Marks & Spence

KITCHEN DECORATION AND FURNITURE Levande Saldo wallpaper, £38 per roll, Scion. Padstow sideboard, £499, Marks & Spencer. ON WALL

Pegboards, from £25 each, Block. Ribba picture ledges, £7.90 each, Ikea. British Coast print, £90 for three, Bold & Noble. ON PEGBOARDS Copper hook rack, £38, Marquis & Dawe. Scissors, £1.75; stapler, £5.50; both Paperchase. Teddy keyring, £65, Steiff. Magnetic memo board, as before. ON LEDGES Twine, £2.95 each; wooden bobbins, £2.95 each; all Wild & Wolf. Familjen cups, £28 for two, Isak range, Cloudberry Living. Pear memo notepad, £4.90, Hedgehog. 'A Day To Remember' keepsake box, £9, Sarah & Bendrix. For a similar organiser, try the recipe organiser, £14.50, Zinc & Co. **ON/UNDER** SIDEBOARD Jive Retro DAB radio, £75, Kitsound range, Tesco Direct. **String in a tin**, £9.95, Wild & Wolf. Cat mug, £9.95, Hus & Hem. Fiona magazine $\textbf{files}, \pounds 11 \ \text{for three, The Holding Company.} \ \textbf{Cushion}$ made in Hetsa Apple, £28 per m, Scion. **DETAIL SHOT OF BEDROOM**

Wall paint; flooring; rug; pinboard; prints; bag; toy box; bench; cushion (on bench); all as before. Doug house unit on castors, £160, Habitat. Cushion made in Terrazzo Sky, £43 per m, Kirkby Design. French knot cushion, £25, Marks & Spencer

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PICK THE

Perfect pattern

Need inspiration? Check out the best of this season's fabrics and wallpapers

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

Find fun-filled prints for kids

WHY WE LOVE THEM

Decorating your child's bedroom is the perfect excuse to choose a scheme that's bright, bold and full of fun. There's an amazing choice of child-friendly designs that will create a stimulating and magical environment.

WHERE TO USE THEM If the room is on the small side, keep intricate wallpaper patterns to a minimum. Start with a feature wallpaper and pick a bright colour from the design for the other walls. An adventurous fabric can look fabulous on curtains or Roman blinds.

HOW TO USE THEM To stop bold patterns and colours from clashing and overpowering the space, the basic rule is to combine a simple fabric pattern with a bold wallpaper, or vice versa. Alternatively, play it safe and choose from the same collection - most design houses have wallpapers and fabrics that are created to work together. Encourage your children to get involved in the decisions - it's a great opportunity for them to express their creativity.

HOW TO ACCESSORISE

THEM Select a colour from the wallpaper or fabric, and reflect this in the accessories and artwork. Your child could even create his or her own collage using leftover fabric, wallpaper and paint samples, so that it complements the scheme.

3 places to buy KIDS' PRINTS

Great Little Trading

Co The colourful children's wallpapers have a practical, wipe-clean finish and cost from £25 per roll. Mr Perswall Check out the Hide & Seek collection of wall murals that provide an educational backdrop for children of all ages, costing £30 per sq m. **Voyage Decoration** The Voyage Enfant collection features a wonderful selection of storybook-inspired

wall art and fabrics, at

£24.50 per m and £40 per m respectively.





The huge range of prints on the market will lure the kids away from designs featuring the characters in the latest blockbuster'

Karen Bray, Acting Features Editor





Spend or save on these brilliant star fabrics



Prints for youngsters

Pick a design that will stimulate their imagination

Elephant trail

This jolly motif will brighten up a playroom Elephants & Trees in cream, green and orange, £9 per roll, B&Q

Streets ahead Colourful houses on a

pretty pink background Happy Street Pink Multi WP31255, £9.95 per roll, Fun4Walls range, I Love Wallpaper

Explore all avenues Encourage your child's

adventurous streak with this fun navigational map

Forager wallpaper, £10 per roll, Graham & Brown

 $Road\ block$

These brightly coloured trucks and cranes are ideal for mini engineers Road Works Ahead 11051,

£12.50 per roll, Holden K2 Kids range, Wilko

Jurassic world

A delightful prehistoric print for dinosaur enthusiasts of all ages

Dinosaurs wallpaper, £20 per roll, Laura Ashley

More over the page...





THE COMPANY Founded in 1946 by paint pioneers John Farrow and Richard Ball, Farrow & Ball started life in a factory in Dorset. Since then, the company has supplied paint for Ford Motor Cars, Raleigh bicycles and even the War Office, later developing a series of National Trust paints. A selection of artisan wallpapers followed, which were produced using block and trough printing methods to create the luxurious

THE NEW COLLECTION Inspired by Farrow & Ball's rural beginnings, the Latest and Greatest collection features

textures the company is now famous for.

Blostma (top); Hornbeam; both £95 per roll, Farrow & Ball

hazy grasses and pretty blossoms, each in a range of seven colours. A large-scale border, Feather Grass, has been included for the first time, with a natural print reminiscent of idyllic meadows. The statement Hornbeam design features the bold outlines of pruned hedgerows, while the more delicate Blostma evokes petals floating softly in the breeze. WHY WE LOVE IT Marrying the beauty of nature with the charm of Dorset's scenery, these artisan papers make a delightfully stylish statement with a calming country feel.

Be relaxed. Be cosy. Be comfortable.





Be in the right bed for you.

In today's fast paced world the value of a great night's sleep is more important than ever. But how do you find the bed that's right for you? Our unique Comfort Station $^{\text{\tiny{M}}}$ Adaptive system is designed to help you do just that.

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With your personal profile we can then help you choose the perfect mattress type that will provide the support you need for a better night's sleep.

Visit our Comfort Station™ Adaptive in store or book an appointment online at bensonsforbeds.co.uk.

PATTERN STRATEGIES

for the risk averse

Choosing the best style, scale and colourway (factoring in the furniture, flooring and light levels you're working with) is harder than you'd think. Follow these first steps in pattern picking and you'll take your room scheme to the next level without having to live with a decorating regret...

> FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

LIVING ROOM DECORATION AND FURNITURE Walls painted in Caramel Sand 4 vinyl matt emulsion, £24.99 for 2.5ltr, Dulux. For similar **flooring**, try the Morning Oak Light UFW1535 laminate planks, £27.99 per sq m, Perspective Wide collection, Quick-Step. Kaleidoscope rug, £175, Plantation Rug Company. Curtains made in Mariam Sorbet, £19 per m, Clarke & Clarke. Jasmine sofa, £2,450; Deep Dream armchair in Natural Art Lima (right), £1,350; weathered-oak step shelf units, £495 each; all Graham and Green. Mellby $\mathbf{armchair}$ (left), £195, lkea; covered in Plains One Jasmine, £30 per m, Scion. Baya coffee table, £625, Lombok. Postino side table, £165, Loaf. Round upholstered drum stool, £130, The Dormy House; covered in Pretty Maids Sweet Pea and Winter, £48 per m, Vanessa Arbuthnott. Regolit floor lamp, £55, lkea. ON COFFEE TABLE For a similar lantern, try the Hampton, £25, India Jane. Rattan basket-weave boxes, £8 for three, George. For similar small **tumblers** (with plants), try the 365+ clear glass tumblers, £2.50 for six, Ikea. Rectangular sisal **bread basket** (used as a tray), £19.50, Marks & Spencer. 1ltr bee jug, £18; bee tumbler, £5; both La Rochere range, John Lewis. White textured vase, £15, Ben de Lisi range, Debenhams. **ON SOFA Cushions**, made in (from left): Stockholm Stripe in Sweet Pea and Winter, £48 per m, Vanessa Arbuthnott; Mariposa Pink; Pink Stars; Mandir Olive; all £19 per m, Clarke & Clarke; Geneva Vintage in Lipstick, £30 per m, Villa Nova; Green Elephant, £19 per m, Clarke & Clarke. ON LEFT SHELF UNIT (from top left) Wild Meadow vase, £14 for two, Next. Small rattan **box** (just seen), £8 for three, George. Retro white vase with lid, £25.50, Nordic House. Scalloped bone picture frame, £15; small pink bone **photo frame**, £10.95; both Graham and Green. Maison limed-wood photo frame, £20, John Lewis. ON RIGHT SHELF UNIT (from top left) Maison limed-wood photo frame, £18, John Lewis. Wild Meadow vase, as before. Grey tealight holder (part of Stylish Votive tray), £109, Nordic House. For a similar white **pot**, try the Kardemumma, £1.50, Ikea. Large floral **ornament**, £12; Scrolls in a **bell jar**, £12; both George. Wild Meadow jug, £12, Next. Ashcroft medium rectangular box tray, £27, Neptune. ON LEFT ARMCHAIR Cushions made in (from left): Jali in Sorbet, £19 per m, Clarke & Clarke; Stockholm Stripe, as before. ON RIGHT ARMCHAIR Cushions made in (from left): Mariposa Pink, as before; Geneva Vintage Lipstick, as before. ON SIDE TABLE Ceramic bottle table lamp, £195, The White Company









Typ Less can be more: one bold but fabulous patterned armchair or rug can have as much impact as a feature wall would

KEEP IT SIMPLE WITH STRIPES

The pattern that's almost not a pattern: narrow, non-detailed stripes are style-neutral, so you only have to worry about getting the colour right. Pin or ticking stripes in two subtle colours won't dominate the room or fight with other pattern you might want to add.



STICK TO JUST **TWO COLOURS**

Start with what you can't change - usually the flooring – and make that one of your colours. Pick another colour that works with it (if you're starting with a neutral, it can be anything). Repeat these colours throughout, using both plains and patterns, but keep the shades and pattern genre (ikat, floral, geometric, etc) the same. This technique has real visual impact if you like a bold look, and works well with bare wood furniture - which effectively acts as your accent colour.

Typ In a simple, two-colour decorating scheme, use contrasting hues – harmonious or tonal shades will look blurred without a third colour for definition

COLOUR SCHOOL

Old gold & white

Create a soothing, sophisticated scheme with this timeless colour pairing

> FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

This soft shade of yellow has a *brown undertone* that makes it richer than bold lemon or egg-yolk tones, but fresher than mustard or ochre. *Mellow* and warm, it contrasts gently with all neutrals, but looks particularly elegant with off-white. It's such an easy-going colour, don't be afraid to make it more than 50% of your colour scheme, but do add in pops of *dark brown*, bronze or gold for a little more definition







More ways with old gold

Try it with... PALE GREY

Put a contemporary spin on old gold by teaming it with grey. A lustrous wallpaper will add glamour and lemon accents will help shades of gold to shine out

Flock on This print has a modern feel Flight fabric in Lemon Gull and Chalk, £39.50 per m, Scion









Try it with... **BLACK & WHITE**

The fail-safe pairing of black and white is given a punchy edge with the addition of old gold. Combine plain white upholstery and flooring with gold walls beneath the dado rail. Add bold pattern, using black as an accent colour

Gold star Add warmth Print Room Yellow Modern Emulsion. £42 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball

Pale flooring Go for white laminate IMU1859 laminate flooring, £27.99 per sq m, Impressive collection, Quick-Step



Graphic leaf Uniform curves Linear Stem wallpaper in Graphite, £49.50 per roll, Orla Kiely range, Harlequin

DECORATION AND FURNITURE Walls

painted in Ming Gold matt emulsion, £39 for 2.5ltr; **blinds** made in Cheslyn Citron/Cream 232030, £53 per m; both Sanderson. Biscayne Mascarpone BS116 carpet, £73 per sq m, Crucial Trading. Snowdrop three-seater **sofa** in Shell brushed linen cotton, £1,340; Snowdrop armchair (right) in Shell brushed linen cotton, £670; both Sofa.com. Verona armchair in Harlequin Plains One Lemonade (left), £1,289, Multiyork. Contemporary **footstool** (H100cm x W89cm x D35cm), from £250, The Dormy House; covered in Harewood Acacia, £24 per m, Clarke & Clarke. Cube stool, £105, The Dormy

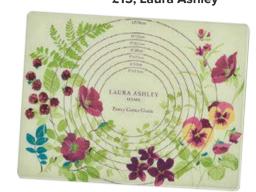
House; covered in Grasmere Dijon, £26 per m, Ashley Wilde. Tolsey Plaid rug in off-white, £340; Aldwych Snow rectangular side table (left), £160; both Neptune. Braganza side table, £338, Homes In Heaven. Large **console** in white, £459, Out There Interiors. Chiswick framed prints, £92 each, Neptune. ON FOOTSTOOL Box file, from £28, Harris & Jones. Patterned tealight holder (used as vase), £25, Lombok. Corinium **platter**, £36, Neptune. Cafetière, £35, House of Fraser. For similar cups and saucers, try the white ceramic, £25 for two, Sophie Conran. Gold leaf trinket dish, £12.50, Cox & Cox. ON SOFA Cushions made in (from left): Harewood Acacia;

Cheslyn Citron/Cream; both as before; Plain Check Hay, £46 per m, Vanessa Arbuthnott; Grasmere Dijon, as before. ON CONSOLE Edie glass lamp, £175, Cox & Cox. Photo frame, £36, Lombok. Ashby apple and pear **ornaments**, £6 each, Neptune. Ribbed **pitcher**, £21, Graham and Green. ON LEFT ARMCHAIR Cushion made in Harewood Acacia, as before. ON RIGHT ARMCHAIR Cushions made in Grasmere Dijon; Plain Check Hay; both as before. ON SIDE **TABLES Lanterns**, from £35 each, Petersham Nurseries. Corinium jar, from £48, Neptune. Tealight holders, from £18 each, Lombok. For a similar glass, try the Godis, £1.30 for six, Ikea



Board meeting

Enjoy fuss-free measuring
Worktop pastry guide,
£15, Laura Ashley





Four score
Go for the
matching set
Ceramic cups,
£26 for four,
Laura Ashley

Team lovely florals with a classic colour palette for a

fresh and timeless feel'

MICHELA COLLING, ACTING STYLE EDITOR



Pretty piece
With illustrated
measures inside
Measuring jug,
£18, Laura Ashley

Be inspired to BAKE AT HOME

Rediscover the joy of baking with the beautiful new Sweet Briar range from Laura Ashley

hether it's glazing a big batch of freshly made buns or dusting icing sugar onto a plump
Victoria sponge, there's a special sense of achievement that comes from making your own pastries, breads and cakes. From kitchen novices to confident cooks, Laura Ashley's new Sweet Briar range has something for everyone to get baking at home.

Featuring measuring cups, utensils and jugs, the extensive selection of bakeware is the ideal way to indulge in your favourite

hobby, while enjoying the best of Laura Ashley's quintessentially British style. The range also offers co-ordinating accessories, including a stunning apron, an owl storage jar, a floral rolling pin and a worktop pastry guide, as well as a selection of handy baking tools.

So, whether you are spending the afternoon trying out a new recipe, or gathering the family for a much-loved favourite, the inspiring new Sweet Briar range is the perfect way to delight in baking at home this season.



MULL



Floral fancy
Protect hands with
this dainty design
Oven glove, £10,
Laura Ashley

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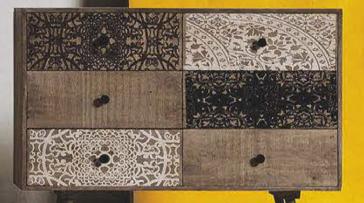
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Design your own moodboard

Cheat your way to a professional finish

Choose your base colour

 \perp Whether it's flooring or a wall, the base colour will be the largest area of colour in your room, so place a generous sample of it onto your board. Including carpet samples will help you think about texture, too.

Add an accent tone

A dramatic contrast or an accent just a few tones away from your base colour? Use your moodboard to play with options and layer it with swatches of fabric, scraps of wallpaper and paint colour charts.

Find the right accessories

These will really set the tone in your room - go for ones that share an accent colour and stick to a single theme. Don't mix styles, or your finished scheme will look messy rather than effortlessly eclectic.

PUNCHY PATTERN

Go bold with statement prints

Fabrics, from left: Mariam Sorbet, £19 per m, Clarke & Clarke; cushion cover made in Stockholm Stripe, £48 per m, Vanessa Arbuthnott; cushion cover made in Pink Stars, £19 per m, Clarke & Clarke. Maison frame, £18, John Lewis. Wild Meadow vase, £14 for two, Next. Swatch of linen sofa fabric, Graham and Green

LOFT LIVING

Put a luxe spin on urban style

IM1858 laminate **flooring**, £19.99 per sq m, Impressive collection, Quick-Step. Smoketree Lt matt emulsion, £39 for 2.5ltr, Sanderson. Golden Dreams VII framed artwork, £300, Carolina Piteira range, Degreeart.com. Braemar **rug**, £275; for similar **bowls**, try the copper bowl, £10; all John Lewis. Mini vintage trunk, £45 for two, Nordic House









BASKETS & BICYCLES

Add Scandi styling to a practical scheme

Cykel 111100 wallpaper, £38 per roll, Scion. Rubber studded flooring in Peppermint Cream, £49.95 per sq m, Harvey Maria. Child's drawing/message framed picture, £65, Sarah & Bendrix. Tealight lanterns, £11.95 each, Orla Kiely range, Wild & Wolf. Swedish clogs, from £62.50, Hedgehog. Mini tumbler, £4.99, Falcon Enamelware. Inox Intelligent Matt Emulsion (in tumbler), £43.50 for 2.5ltr, Little Greene. Cuckoo clock, £49.95, Muji

Decorating?

FOLLOW THE 3 GOLDEN RULES

THE 70-20-10 RULE For a balanced scheme, keep 70% of the elements (say, walls and floors) as one colour, then add 20% in a second colour (fabrics) and 10% in an accent (accessories).

THE PATTERN RULE When imixing patterns, use large with medium or medium with small, never large with small. Pick prints that share a colour in common.

THE PAINTED BOX RULE

The look of paint changes according to the time of day and the light in a room. Paint the inside of a large box with a tester to create a miniature 'room' and see how the colour changes within a 3D space.

AND FINALLY... Always add a surprise. A focal point - whether it's a feature wall or a piece of art - is the short cut to a 'wow' room.



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OJECT

Get the very best advice and inspiration for all your home renovation projects

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We installed energyefficient triple glazing'

As part of a remarkable

eco-conscious renovation that turned a draughty Fifties house into a lowenergy home, Rob and Karen Rickey swapped their existing windows for triple-glazed designs. The couple used Rationel AURAPLUS® windows, made from timber frames with external cladding attached by clips. The windows were installed in projecting plywood boxes that were aligned with the external wall

insulation to prevent cold bridging (when a break occurs in the insulation, resulting in heat being lost). Window openings were enlarged on the south side of the house to take advantage of the sun. Rob, who is a consultant in Passivhaus design and sustainable building for LHC (lhc.net), explains: 'If you position the majority of your glazing to the south, the windows will absorb the sun's rays and give you free

heating in winter.'

FIND OUT MORE...

■ Triple glazing has an extra pane of glass that helps to retain more heat indoors than double glazing, cutting down the amount of energy used.

■ For even greater energy

efficiency, install triple-glazed windows along with insulated window frames.

■ Triple glazing works best in a house that is well insulated throughout.





Bespoke storage



Don't know where to start? Try our top five places...

IKEA 020 3645 0000;

ikea.com/gb With Ikea's extensive choice of shelves, bookcases and display units in metal, wood and painted finishes, you can create your own solution for every room.

NEVILLE JOHNSON 0161 873

8333; nevillejohnson.co.uk

Tailored to fit your specifications by experienced designers, the company prides itself on its hand-crafted quality. Its shelving and storage solutions are suitable for living rooms, bedrooms and home offices.

SHARP\$ 0800 789789;

sharps.co.uk It has an extensive range of fitted wardrobes and home-office storage solutions to make the best of the available space. There's a wide range of styles, colours and finishes in hundreds of configurations.

SHELFSTORE 01628 782642:

shelvingsystem.co.uk

Shelfstore is a multipurpose bookcase, shelving and storage system, available in six depths, eight heights and seven widths.

STORE 0844 414 2885;

aplaceforeverything.co.uk

Store stocks the Elfa modular shelving and drawer system, which consists of racks, shelves, rails, hooks, hangers, baskets and a range of accessories that combine to create endless storage possibilities.



Wooden blind

As well as a stunning collection of shutters, Hillarys also offer a wide range of blinds too. For an on-trend and stylish new look choose Wooden blinds. Available in a selection of finishes, colours and slat widths, you'll be able to create a look that is as individual as you are. Plus, when you choose Hillarys you'll benefit from over 40 years' experience as the window coverings experts.

> TO BOOK AN APPOINTMENT WITH YOUR LOCAL ADVISOR CALL 0800 916 6501 OR VISIT HILLARYS.CO.UK







TOP TREND

Freestanding kitchens

In recent years, modern kitchen

designs have tended to be sleek and streamlined, with built-in hidden appliances, but if you're after a more casual approach, why not go for freestanding? By mixing different-sized cupboards, islands and open shelving, you can create a flexible design that suits the size of your kitchen and the wav you use it. DeVOL Kitchens offers an extensive choice of freestanding sink cabinets, islands, pantries, butcher's blocks, dressers and pot cupboards, all custom-made to fit



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your needs, with carefully chosen

accessories and finishes.

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scrubbers, £15.81 for eight, 3M Direct



If you want to know how much your house is worth or how much your neighbour's house recently sold for, take a look at propertypriceadvice.co.uk,

which has a handy property-valuation tool and useful data on properties in your area







ON THE SURFACE Patterned tiles

Add a bold splash of colour and pattern to your kitchen or bathroom with these intricate Spanish porcelain tiles from Tile Mountain. Designed to replicate a vintage encaustic pattern with a matt finish, the 10 different variations produce a random effect that will create a wonderful design feature in your home. They measure 440 sq mm and are suitable for both walls and floors.

Skyros Delft Blue wall and floor tiles, £16.99 per sq m, Tile Mountain



Tier-on-tier shutters

Transform your home with made-to-measure shutters from Hillarys. Crafted to your exact requirements and made from the finest quality materials, Hillarys shutters will look simply stunning and will truly stand the test of time. And what's more, when you choose Hillarys you'll benefit from a free in-home appointment to discuss your design ideas, a no-obligation quote, and expert measuring and fitting too.

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EXTREME Transformations





From dull chalet bungalow...

Angie Faulkner and De Carlson extended their Seventies home up and out, adding modern glazing to make the most of its river views

Take the 60-SECOND TOUR

THE PROPERTY

A three-bedroom, detached Seventies chalet bungalow in a Somerset village.

WHO LIVES HERE

Angie Faulkner and her partner De Carlson. Angie works in finance and De is a dietetic assistant.

WHAT THEY DID

Extended the loft space with two dormer windows, converted the

garage, extended to the side and rear, and fitted bifold doors to the garden. Some internal walls were removed, and the bungalow was also rewired and replumbed throughout.

WHAT IT COST

Angie and De paid £350,000 for the bungalow in 2009 and have spent £150,000 extending and remodelling the property, which is currently valued at £750,000.



FIRST FLOOR ▶ Two new dormers enlarged the loft space, which is now a main bedroom with an en suite

■ GROUND FLOOR There's an open-plan kitchen/dining/living room, two bedrooms, a bathroom, a utility room and a loo on this level





to stunning modern home

or Angie Faulkner and her partner, De Carlson, the decision to buy their home six years ago was based solely on its Somerset location. The couple were living in a two-bedroom flat and wanted a more spacious home with a garden. When they first viewed the rather uninspiring Seventies chalet bungalow, it was tired and dated, with all the accommodation on the ground floor plus one poky loft room, which was little more than glorified storage space. However, its location, standing in a peaceful setting on the banks of a river, was superb.

'The views were outstanding, and the idea of living right on the river with our own mooring was very appealing,' says Angie. 'Although it's on the edge of a village, it's very close to both Bath and Bristol, so we bought the bungalow with the idea of renovating it in the future.'

Angie and De decided to embark on an ambitious plan to remodel the building completely, inside and out. 'We'd been running a café in Bath, which was where we first met our architect, Jon Foulds,' says Angie. 'We didn't bother contacting any other designers because we knew Jon would do a fantastic job.' **CREATING SPACE** Jon's architectural practice, Whitebox Architects (whitebox-architects.co.uk).

devised a scheme that would extend the property both upwards and outwards. This involved converting the garage to create a utility room and form part of the new kitchen, building an extension to the rear and side, fitting dormer windows to extend the loft, and removing the back wall of the bungalow to install glazing and bifold doors so the couple could fully enjoy the views of the river.

'We were camping upstairs in the cramped loft room, which we later discovered was infested with rats,' says De. 'It was hot in summer and too low to stand up in, so the idea of extending the head height by adding two large dormers was exciting. Taking the pitched ->



... 'the glazing - adding so much glass

We love...

has totally changed the whole feel of the house'



roof down and building a side extension would create a larger living room, and building a flat-roofed extension through the middle of the building would open up the hall.'

'Our aim was to make the house as beautiful as possible on a fairly limited budget,' says Angie, who sent leaflets to neighbours explaining their ideas prior to applying for planning permission. 'A top tip would be to really engage the planners and council - invite them to the house and look them in the eye to explain what you hope to do.'

Once planning permission had been granted,

Angie, De and their pets moved into a guest cottage in the garden, which was purpose-built by the same builders who were working on the main house. This timber-clad building also overlooks the river and has one main room and an en-suite bathroom. It provided an ideal base for eight months, and meant that the couple were on hand throughout the project. STARTING WORK 'Our builder was a local man with an excellent reputation,' explains De. 'Virtually everything was replaced, although we did manage to keep the roof tiles, which helped us to stay within our budget. The bungalow was stripped out and the rear wall demolished, with new aluminium-framed triple glazing installed. We had real problems with the glaziers though, which delayed work by about six weeks.'

The alterations give the illusion of space without dramatically changing the existing footprint or imposing on the plot. The old galley kitchen was replaced by the new living room, and the kitchen was relocated to the other side of the house. Roof lights were fitted to bring natural light into the centre of the ground floor, which serves as an open-plan hallway and music room.

Externally, the front of the house and the new dormers were clad with larch boarding, which De stained before it was fixed in place. In contrast, a modern oak entrance door was fitted, matched by a panel of horizontal oak boarding to the rear of the house.

The building was rewired, replumbed and insulated. Underfloor heating was laid on the ground floor and internal walls were removed to create a contemporary, open-plan layout. A structural steel post in the kitchen was painted vivid orange to contrast with the white walls and off-white porcelain floor tiles.

Almost the entire ground floor is now dedicated to an open-plan kitchen, dining and living area, with two large sets of bifolds that can be pushed back to create a virtually seamless connection to the terrace.

Beyond the patio, a large lawned area gently slopes down to the riverbank and the couple's own private mooring. 'When the weather's warm, we like nothing more than to cruise our boat along to one of the riverside pubs for a leisurely lunch,' says Angie. 'Living here really does feel like being permanently on holiday.'









'A top tip would be to invite the planners to the house and explain what you hope to do'

RENOVATION **KNOW-HOW**

- Many alterations can be made under permitted development, meaning you don't need to get planning permission. For more information on planning and building regulations, visit planningportal.gov.uk and always check with your local authority before making any major changes.
- **■** Keep your neighbours informed at all stages and you might need to obtain party-wall agreements, too. Check the advice given at planningportal.gov.uk.
- For extensions and major remodelling, it's usually advisable to employ an architect to draw up accurate plans: the Royal Institute of British Architects (architecture. com) holds a directory of approved architects.
- Get at least three quotes for all major purchases, including when you're hiring tradesmen and, whenever possible, negotiate fixed prices for each job rather than paying a daily rate.
- It's not usually advisable to undertake major roofing work on a DIY basis. Go to the National Federation of Roofing Contractors' website (nfrc.co.uk) to find a reputable roofer to do the work.
- Remember to factor delays into the schedule and always have a contingency pot of money to pay for those unforeseen expenses.

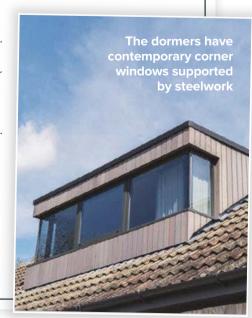
IN DETAIL DORMER WINDOWS

See how Angie and Degained space with dormers

Angie and De's main bedroom has two new dormers, clad in stained larch boarding.

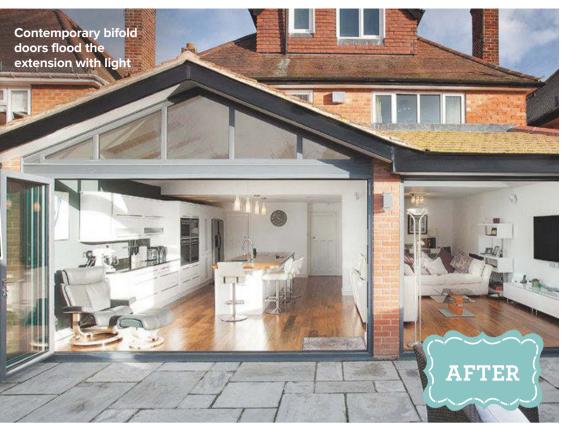
- Extending upwards into the loft can be a cost-effective way to add space without encroaching on the garden, and is often the cheapest way to create extra room.
- By installing dormer windows in the roof slope, you can increase head height and get the

- maximum amount of usable space in your room.
- Dormer windows can create a statement in their own right, and can be clad to match the house or in contrasting materials.
- A loft conversion is considered permitted development and doesn't require planning permission, provided that certain conditions are met. See planningportal. gov.uk for details.









'It feels so light and airy'

Penny and Douglas Dawson have given their traditional home an entirely new look with a contemporary glazed extension

hen Penny and Douglas Dawson bought their Thirties house in Solihull, West Midlands, they knew they wanted to make some major improvements. After converting the garage and the loft, they decided to build a single-storey rear extension to create a kitchen, dining and living space. **NEW PLANS** The work came under permitted development so it didn't need planning permission, but the couple asked an architect to draw up the plans. 'It would have been cheaper to build a flat-roof extension, but we



felt that a pitched roof in the kitchen would create a more interesting space,' says Penny. 'The living room ceiling is inset with a large roof light, which means it's always bright.' **PROJECT SETBACKS** The position of existing drains meant that the builders had to create expensive piled foundations, and an old steel and concrete air-raid shelter was also uncovered and had to be removed. 'The foundations added an unexpected £4,000 to our costs, but the builders were very helpful and sorted out any problems,' says Penny.

Bespoke aluminium bifold doors from Origin (origin-global.com) were chosen for their durability and thermal efficiency. 'As soon as the doors were installed, the space immediately felt warm, and our heating bills have drastically reduced, even though the house is now bigger,' says Penny.

The two sets of bifolds are divided by a narrow brick wall, which provides additional support for the roof and allowed the Dawsons to incorporate a fully glazed gable end.

The house cost £290,000 in 2002, the extension - which took five months - cost £120,000, and the property is currently worth more than £550,000. 'It has totally changed the way we live,' says Penny. 'We have plenty of storage and more than enough space for entertaining. It's a pleasure to spend time here.'



Trials & triumphs...

■ What was the high point?

'When the floor was installed, the open-plan space was transformed.'

Any low points?

'Finding drains where we wanted to dig foundations.'

What was the project saviour?

'We wouldn't be without the kitchen's gadgets, like the boiling-water tap.'

FOR YOUR DAILY INSPIRATION!

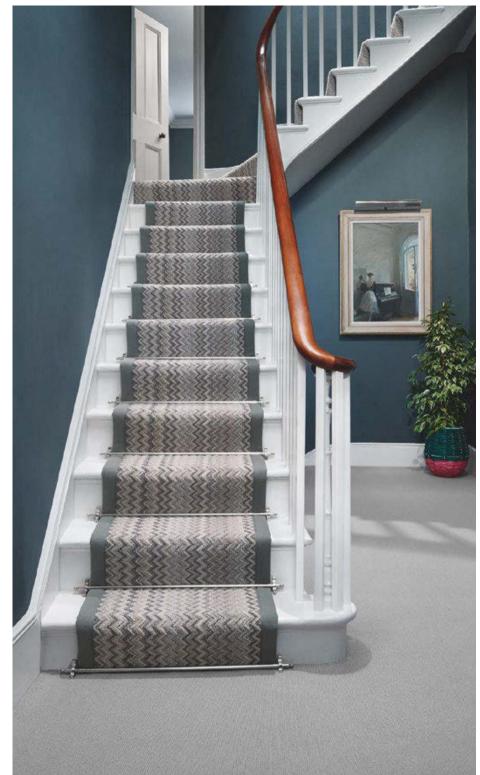
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CRUCIAL TRADING

1 Storage divider Teresa designed the double-sided storage unit to partition off the kitchen from the dining area. She can access the kitchen equipment and tableware stored inside it from both sides For a similar shelving unit, try the Aspen, £695, Habitat







Take the

60-SECOND TOUR

THE PROPERTY

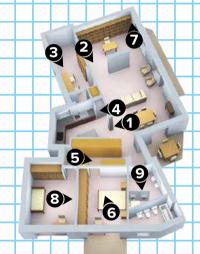
A two-bedroom apartment in Rome, Italy, built in 1958. The owners bought it in 1989.

WHO LIVES HERE

Teresa Paratore, with her husband, Fabio, and their son, Gianmarco, 13. Teresa is an architect and Fabio is a civil engineer.

THE LOOK

Sleek, with plenty of clever storage ideas ensuring it stays free of clutter. Bright artwork and furniture add colour to the all-white décor.



THE LAYOUT The entrance is via a galley workspace, which leads through to a home office. This can be partitioned off from the open-plan living and dining area, which adjoins the kitchen. There are two bedrooms, one with an en-suite bathroom, and a shower room

Make your space work harder &



Bespoke, built-in storage and space solutions can transform the way you live. See the possibilities in action in Teresa Paratore's flat - it's a showcase of great ideas...



3 Built-in desk

The hallway has a slimline, built-in workstation, open shelving and a drawer unit. White-painted built-in cupboards at one end provide more storage and ensure the space looks sleek. Concealed lights just below the ceiling add atmosphere

4 Angled kitchen Teresa has installed a

modern kitchen with handleless unit doors in what was once an awkward corner where a bathroom and a hallway used to be. Tall wall units and a breakfast bar make the most of every square inch of space







SMART STORAGE SOLUTIONS

For similar modular storage in a range of configurations, try the Bestå system from Ikea

5 Wall of storage The corridor that leads

to the bedrooms is fitted with floor-to-ceiling cupboards that are kitted out with shelves and hanging rails. Painted to blend in with the all-white walls, they provide plenty of 'invisible' storage

6 Drawer units

In the couple's bedroom, all clutter is hidden away inside wall-hung drawer units, arranged in a neat formation with three storage cubes for books above them. The symmetrical arrangement brings a sense of balance and order to the space For similar wall lights, try the Anglepoise 1227, £235 each, John Lewis









8 Box shelves

Wall-hung drawer units and open box shelves for books keep Gianmarco's bedroom free of clutter and create a sense of space by making more of the floor area visible For similar box shelves, try the Duraline triple cubes, £17.99 for three, Homebase

9 Storage tower In the bathroom, five

floating cupboards hung in a stack ensure there are no cosmetics cluttering up surfaces. Teresa added castors to a storage stool to make it easy to move around - it can be pushed beneath the open basin unit when it's not needed









Take the

60-SECOND TOUR

THE PROPERTY

A five-bedroom, Fifties house in Hampton, southwest London.

WHO LIVES HERE

Caroline and Tim Norris, with Tim's daughter, Maya, 14, Caroline's sons, Stanley, 10, and Ted, nine, and their daughter, Ada, two.

WHAT THEY DID

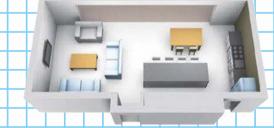
The couple knocked down a conservatory and built an extension across the back of the house to create an open-plan kitchen, dining and living area

THE LOOK

Simple and contemporary, with high-gloss units and textural tiles.

LESSONS LEARNED

66 I was worried that a northfacing extension would be too dark, but thanks to a good architect, cleverly angled Velux windows and bifold doors, it's constantly light. ??



THE LAYOUT There's a bank of base and wall units to the right of the door. The sink and hob are positioned in a central island, beyond which is a range cooker and more base units. There's a living area at the other end of the room



hen Caroline and Tim Norris were looking for their first house together to accommodate their blended family of six. they wanted to find somewhere with enough space for them all to be together. This meant that being able to create an open-plan kitchen, dining and living area was essential.

'Before we made an offer on our house, I redesigned the ground floor on paper to make sure it could work for our needs,' says Caroline. 'When an architect friend, Shaun Knight, said my plans would work, it was all systems go.' As soon as the house was theirs, the couple got

started. 'I had a clear idea of how I wanted the house to be and Shaun mapped that out for us, adding his own suggestions,' says Caroline.

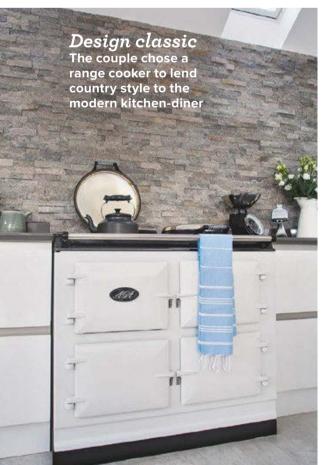
With the building work underway, the couple shopped around for kitchens, finally deciding on white high-gloss units. 'The idea for including a range cooker came while we were visiting the Ideal Home Show,' says Caroline. 'Tim felt that its classic style would contrast well with the contemporary units.'

They completed the modern scheme with steel bar stools and slate-grey pendants, plus a feature wall tiled in quartzite to add rustic texture. Caroline is thrilled with the result. 'The open-plan layout works really well and enables all of us to spend time together,' she says.

▲ Textured touch

Caroline and Tim's wooden dining table adds colour and texture to the contemporary kitchen-diner. They converted an existing side extension behind the kitchen into a practical utility room





66 We employed Harper Kitchens to do the building work because we felt it would give us good value for money. The builders spent the first three months taking down the conservatory and building foundations for the new rear extension. We stayed with family for the following three months while the ground floor was reconfigured. The building work throughout cost £60,000, and the installation of the kitchen and

utility room cost £2,596.

How we did it



▲ *All square*The sleek, angular mixer tap perfectly mirrors the square undercounter sink set into the island

KITCHEN SOURCEBOOK

WHERE TO BUY

Integra Astral White **units**, from £4,502 for a kitchen, Magnet. Cemento Silestone Spa worktop, £713 per slab (L306cm x W140cm x D3cm), Granite Quartz Store. For a similar sink, try the Subline 700-U, from £528, Blanco. Fusion square tap, from £1,150, Quooker. Black quartzite maxi wall tiles, £57.46 per sq m, Mandarin Stone. Wet Bianco floor tiles, £56 per sq m, Tiles of Wisdom. FAB30LFA fridgefreezer, £1,124; SI3644D hob, £548; SFP140 single **oven**, £729; all Smeg. For a similar cooker, try the three-oven dual-control, from £9,775, Aga. For a similar fridge-freezer (utility room), try the RS7667FHCWW, £879, Samsung range, John Lewis. Bifold doors, £5,600, Metal Window Renovations. Spinning BH1 **pendants**, £229 each, &Tradition range; Base Copper floor lamp, £845, Tom Dixon range; all David Village Lighting. Art bar stools, £99 each, Atlantic Shopping. For a similar table, try the Drio, £650; for a similar bench, try the Radius, from £225; both Habitat. Eames-style chairs, £59 each, Cult Furniture. Bagsie love seat in Cloud Blue vintage linen, £1,695; Pavlova **sofa** in Magnesium washed cotton linen, from £1,345; both Loaf. For similar side tables, try the Dream, £240 for three, Rockett St George

FOR DETAILS TURN TO **OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY**





ake the

THE PROPERTY

A five-bedroom, detached Thirties house in north London.

WHO LIVES HERE

Debbie and Lee Collins, with their daughters, Millie, eight, and Amber, five.

WHAT THEY DID

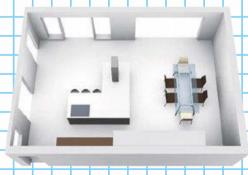
The couple knocked through the kitchen, dining room and living room, and extended across the back of the property to create an open-plan kitchen-diner and living space with glass doors leading out to the garden.

THE LOOK

Sleek and contemporary, with glossy, oak-effect laminate units, plus antiqued mirrored touches for interest.

LESSONS LEARNED

Take wall units up to the ceiling. My old ones stopped short and became a messy, dusty spot for storing unused jugs and vases.



THE LAYOUT The hob is located in an L-shaped island, which is also used as a breakfast bar. A run of units on one wall houses the ovens and the sink. At the far end of the room, there's a dining area and doors leading to the garden



ebbie and Lee Collins' Thirties house was in such a shocking state when they bought it, they had to start renovating it as soon as they moved in. The house had been damaged by fire and hadn't been touched for 40 years, but its peaceful location won over the couple.

Debbie and Lee had big plans to turn the house into a spacious, modern home, complete with a super-sized kitchen, dining and family room on the ground floor, with direct access to the garden. They set to work at once. 'We knocked down internal walls downstairs and added an extension across the back to create an open-plan kitchen, dining and living area, with glass doors leading outside,' says Debbie.

When it came to the style of the kitchen, Debbie already had firm ideas. 'I wanted a modern, uncluttered, sleek look, with lots of worksurfaces, storage and appliances designed to help me cook for a crowd,' she says. 'I also

wanted it to have warmth because so many contemporary designs can look stark and cold.'

An open-plan layout was also an essential feature of the new kitchen. 'I love cooking and entertaining, and I didn't want a separate dining room - the idea of carrying serving dishes back and forth wasn't at all appealing, nor was the idea of missing out on the fun while everyone was in the other room,' explains Debbie. 'I also wanted space for the kids to play, rather than having a separate playroom, so we could all be together.'

To make the sleek new kitchen more homely, Debbie opted for a mix of tactile materials, including warm wood-effect laminate and glamorous antiqued mirrored glass, completing the look with decorative lighting. 'Now it's the room where I spend most of my time,' says Debbie. 'I did worry a bit about everyone watching me while I'm cooking, but I've become more relaxed about it because I feel very happy in here - it's such a sociable space.'

▲ Centrepiece

The L-shaped island creates a striking focal point, bridging the different zones of the room. A run of units along the back wall frames the space and houses the triple ovens at eyelevel



▲ Subtly hidden Discreetly installed in the worktop, the downdraft cooker hood simply rises up at the

touch of a button when needed

KITCHEN SOURCEBOOK WHERE TO BUY

Kuhlmann handleless mirror gloss Fina Metal and wood-effect Finn Oak Wenge cabinetry, £500 for a W600mm base unit;

Snow Storm quartz worktops, £4,000; antiqued-glass splashback and wall cladding, £1,000; all Wilson Fink. For similar ovens, try the HB78GB270B, £977 each; for a similar induction

hob, try the EH845FL17E, £669; LD97AA670B cooker hood, £1,529; all Siemens range, Ao.com. For a similar microwave, try the CM633GBS1B, £773, Siemens range, BHS Direct. For a similar **fridge-freezer**, try the RF540ADUSX4, £2,100, Fisher & Paykel. Linus-S tap, from £355; Subline 700-U **sink** in Silgranit Alumetallic, £528; both Blanco. Basic boiling water tap, from £850, Quooker. For similar **floor** tiles, try the Florence, £39.95 per sq m, Spacers Tile & Wood Flooring. E wall **lights** in Rose, £56 each, Kartell range; Bombo bar stools, £399 each, Magis range; all John Lewis. For a similar **table**, try the Seven, from £1,008; for similar chairs, try the Boheme, £183 each; both

FOR DETAILS TURN TO **OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY**

Calligaris range, Design Icons.

Betty round vase, £38, Brissi





66 The structural pillar in the centre of the room was the bane of our lives because

we couldn't make the layout work around it, nor could we remove it as it would have cost £5,000. But our designer, Andy Martin from Wilson Fink, cleverly suggested incorporating it into an L-shaped island and making it into a feature. He also offered us a great choice of modern materials. The work took about two months and the kitchen installation cost £3,600.







azel and Stephen Perry bought their Cornish holiday home in 1986, after years of visiting the area. 'We live in Bristol, but this house (harlynfarmhouse.co.uk) is in such a beautiful spot, we wanted to spend as much time as possible here while our children were small,' says Hazel. 'However, it took us nearly 30 years to update the kitchen.'

Originally the farmhouse dairy, the room had a galley layout, a low ceiling and an old electric oven. As the couple wanted the space to have a kitchen they could relax and eat in too, they decided to add an extension to the house before fitting it out with hand-made units. 'The colour scheme was inspired by the house's location,' says Hazel. 'From the windows, we can see rocks, sky, sea and sand, so we had the cabinetry painted blue. Even the granite of the worktops was picked for its resemblance to the rocks we get down here.'

So was the new kitchen worth waiting for? 'It has improved life here all round,' says Hazel.

TURN OVER TO FIND OUT HOW

Hazel and Stephen created their new kitchen

WHO LIVES HERE

Hazel and Stephen Perry.

WHAT THEY DID

The couple built an extension to house an open-plan kitchen with living and dining areas, then installed a traditional hand-made kitchen and modern appliances.

LESSONS LEARNED

66 It's vital to get on with the people you employ to do your build. I made a point of baking biscuits and buns for everyone on site each time we visited. They appreciated it and we think they worked even more enthusiastically as a result.



THE LAYOUT The base units are arranged in an L shape around an island. There are two sinks - one beneath the window and the other in the island. There's a dining and living area at the other end of the room

























1990

1980

2000

2010

2020



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True blue

Hazel had the interior of this wall unit painted dark blue to create a backdrop that contrasts with her white china

KITCHEN SOURCEBOOK

WHERE TO BUY

Bespoke units, from £500 for a W600m unit, Woodchester Cabinet Makers. Granite worktops and upstands, from £400 per linear m, Trebarwith Stoneworks. Wave splashback, £1,622 per sq m, Steve Robinson. RUX110 sink, £243, Franke. Oberon U tap in Pewter, £358, Perrin & Rowe range, Just Perrin. For a similar **range cooker**, try the F1092DXEISS/C-EU, £3,855, Falcon range, Homecare Supplies. For a similar **extractor** hood, try the FHDSE1092SLN, £1,540, Falcon range, Appliances Direct. For a similar dishwasher, try the SN278I01TG, £999, Siemens range, Ao.com. Dijon tumbled limestone flooring, from £42 per sq m, Mandarin Stone. Flight **blinds**, from £35 each, Scion range; Coastal Stripe curtains (on bifold doors), £25 per m; Pemberley **chairs**, £99 each; all John Lewis. Norden extendable table, £275, Ikea. For a similar artwork, try the St Ives canvas, £85, Iris Clelford range, Whistlefish

FOR DETAILS TURN TO **OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY**

▲ Table talk

An extendable beech table from Ikea adds warmth to the scheme. Its simple lines complement the Shaker units

How we did it

66 The extension for an open-plan kitchen

with living and dining areas was a big part of a massive overhaul we gave the whole house. We asked architect Mark Gregory of MSG Arc Build to draw up the plans and our builder, Anthony Richards Construction, kept everything running smoothly. Woodchester Cabinet Makers designed, built and painted the units by hand. The building work and kitchen fitting took around nine months. Luckily, we could live in our house in Bristol at the time, so we didn't have to live with the upheaval going on around us.







FEATURE KAT NICHOLLS STYLING LOUISA TUBMAN PHOTOGRAPHS ALISTAIR NICHOLLS PLAN PERSONA-ID

essica and Mark Bannister were in desperate need of a decent bathroom in their family home. Their main bathroom had no loo and its décor was tired, while the loo on the first floor was located in a small, unappealing shower room.

The couple wanted the new bathroom to serve two functions; to be a light, airy family space to use with their two daughters, but also to be a sanctuary where they could enjoy a relaxing bath. They decided to rejig the firstfloor layout, turning the main bathroom into a family sized en suite to the main bedroom.

To get the right look, they asked interior designer Louisa Tubman for help. 'Louisa took inspiration from the bathroom's original Carrara marble fireplace and chose wall and floor tiles to match,' says Jessica. 'All the fixtures we chose are sleek and contemporary, keeping the space simple and calm with a timeless feel. We also added clever touches, such as a motion-sensor light above the loo, so if we use the bathroom at night, we just wave our hands to activate a warm glow in the dark.'

Jessica also added rustic and period-style details, such as wooden hooks, a sheepskin rug and an ornate mirror, to add texture and interest. 'It's great because it's a practical space for bathing the girls, but I can close the door at the end of the evening once they are in bed and take time for myself,' says Jessica.

▲ Smoothly does it

A wall-hung loo, modern flush plate and mirrored cabinet keep the look calm and unfussy, with all essential items hidden away. The beautiful fireplace and the original sash window provide a classic contrast to the contemporary fittings





Finishing touches Rustic accessories, like a wooden stool and a sheepskin rug, add texture and interest to the room



Perfect arch The sleek, simple curves of the basin mixer tap echo those of the freestanding bath and the floorstanding bath/shower mixer

How we did it 66 The bathroom was next to the main bedroom. so we moved its door from the hallway to inside the bedroom. This allowed us to move the bath against another wall and fit in a loo. The position of the fireplace and plumbing restrictions dictated the layout, and we had to put in a step and raise the bath for the waste to work. It took three weeks to complete the work; the interior design and project management cost £800 and the building and installation cost £4,000.

BATHROOM SOURCEBOOK

WHERE TO BUY

Bayou **bath**, £1,499, Bathstore. Austen wall-hung loo, £295; Project washbasin, from £128; both Saneux. Kappa50 flush plate, £101, Geberit range, Bathroom Sensations. Elite single bath/shower mixer, £563, Hudson Reed. For a similar basin mixer, try the Storm side action, £151, Roper Rhodes range, Tap Warehouse. East Hampton marble tiles, £115 per sq m, Fired Earth. Mirrored cabinet, £125, John Lewis. For a similar **mirror**, try the Wilton Carlyle beaded grey, £173, One World Trading Co. For a similar **sheepskin**, try the Ludde, £30, Ikea. For a similar **basket**, try the iron storage basket, £49, Rockett St George. For a similar tree ornament, try the metal windswept wall art, £29.99, Primrose

FOR DETAILS TURN TO **OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY**





You dream, we deliver



Victoria Plum.com your home

Spa style BATHROOM IDEAS



▲ Shelf life A neat, tile-clad niche built into the shower wall is handy for keeping toiletries within reach

BATHROOM SOURCEBOOK

WHERE TO BUY

Starlet Oval bath, from £1,800, Bette Baths range; for a similar vanity unit with basin, try the 646mm Royal Reflex in Truffle, £1,035, Keuco range; 210mm Rainshower shower, £237; for a similar **shower valve**, try the Atrio Jota thermostatic, £485; for a similar handheld shower, try the F Digital Euphoria, £974; all Grohe range; for a similar basin mixer, try the Silver 1 Hole, £223, Ideal Standard range; Designer bath wall shower with hose and handset, £95.21, Crosswater range; Laufen Pro wall-hung loo with flush plate, from £577; all UKBathrooms. Classic Royale polished marble tiles, from £34.62 per sq m, Mandarin Stone. Walls painted in James White Modern Emulsion, £42 for 2.5ltr, Farrow & Ball. **Blinds** made in Bella in Aqua 04791/04, £86 per m, Manuel Canovas range; lined in India 3713374, £42.70 per m, Casamance range; both Gramlick Designs. Edition 11 1,050mm **mirror cabinet**, £1,782, Keuco range, RSF Bathroom Designs. EL-20068 polished chrome wall lights, £48.99 each, Endon Lighting range, Online Lighting. Extendable mirror, £49, John Lewis

FOR DETAILS TURN TO **OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY**





▲ Discreet storage The vanity unit features a push-to-open drawer with lots of hidden storage

How we did it **66** We wanted to make our en suite feel more

luxurious, so we played around with ideas, talking to friends, our builder and architect. Once we'd worked out how to enlarge it by removing the bedroom wardrobe, the layout fell into place. The next decision was the tiles. I think stone instantly creates a feeling of luxury, and this marble's veining is beautiful. It was a big expense, but it's the thing that most makes the room feel like a sanctuary. The project took eight weeks, and the building work cost about £4,000.

IDEAL HOME'S ULTIMATE STORAGE STORAGE

We looked beyond the obvious to compile this list of the 45 cleverest storage products on the market. Could one of them change your life?

FOR WHERE TO BUY ITEMS SHOWN, TURN TO OUR SHOPPING DIRECTORY

ll storage is
useful, but not allstorage can claim
'genius' status. In
compiling this list –
which took weeks to
research – the Ideal Home team aimed
to draw up a definitive collection of
brilliant storage products that can
genuinely contribute to a smootherrunning home. Many of them are not
pretty, but all are 100% practical.
Good looks were not on our list of
criteria (although they're certainly

a 'nice to have'). We blinkered ourselves to pick only the products that have had particular thought and planning put into their design to make them not just 'handy' but indispensable – these are the solutions to facilitate the way you choose to live and you'll use them for years to come. In some cases, items are unique to certain retailers; in others, they are more generic. For the latter, we've chosen the version we think has an edge over its competitors in its design or features.

OUR KEY CRITERIA

Products had to tick more than one of these boxes...

- ☑ Style neutral
- ✓ Solves a specific problem
- ☑ Can be used in more than one room
- ✓ Multitasks
- ✓ Well designed and made
- ✓ Can be adapted or customised
- ✓ Uses space efficiently
- ☑ Can be bought 'off the peg'





THE BATHROOM SLIM JIM

WHY WE LOVE IT: At 27cm wide, it slots in the gap between the loo/basin/bath and you can hide loo rolls, bath toys, cleaning stuff or unmentionables in it Bathroom storage caddy, £24.95, Scotts of Stow



THE MULTIPURPOSE TROLLEY

WHY WE LOVE IT: In the course of its life, you'll use it in every room. Fill it with tools, toys, craft kit, condiments, toiletries... its uses are endless Raskog trolley, £50, Ikea



THE ULTIMATE TOY BOX

WHY WE LOVE IT: Deep enough for big toys, it has wheels and a handle, so no lifting is required, and the flip lid won't come apart from the box (unless you want it to), so everything stays covered 75ltr storage box, £12.99, Argos



THE OVER-DOOR HANGER

WHY WE LOVE IT: Frees up space that bathrobes, bags, belts and coats would otherwise fill. Every door needs one - and no need to get the drill out! Enudden hanger, £1.95, Ikea



THE PAPER CORRALLER

WHY WE LOVE IT: Put one anywhere that papers, magazines and paperwork collect. If you've no time to sort it, just sweep it all into this and you're done Wall-mounted chrome magazine rack, £20, The Contemporary Home



THE CLASSIC FILING CABINET

WHY WE LOVE IT: This slim (28cm x 38cm) version of the iconic Bisley takes up very little floor space. Plus, it comes in 17 colours for a less 'officey' look Nine-drawer filing cabinet,







THE MAKE-UP MODULE

WHY WE LOVE IT: Part of an 18-piece range that you can mix, match and stack to create a tower of storage for small items - make-up, jewellery, accessories, buttons, Barbie shoes...

Acrylic one-drawer deep box, £8.95, Muji



THE BAG GALLERY

WHY WE LOVE IT: Put one on the back of a door for the bags you use every day or want to show off (and one inside the wardrobe door for the rest...) Modular handbag store, £25, Store



THE VERSATILE FLATTIE

WHY WE LOVE IT: The narrow shelves are ideal for tall bottles without intruding into the room or cupboard you fix it up in. Great for bathroom, kitchen, utility or garage Industrial-style metal shelves,

£120, Cox & Cox





THE SECRET GAP-FILLER

WHY WE LOVE IT: This turns a few wasted inches in a kitchen or utility into precious storage space Slide-out storage tower, £37.95, Scotts of Stow



THE DRAWER TAMER

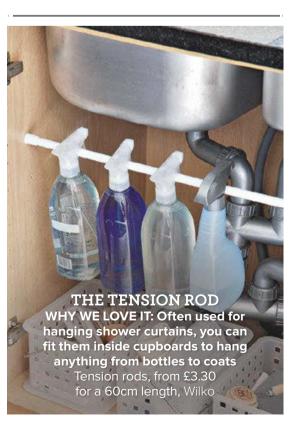
WHY WE LOVE IT: Classier than plastic, and just as good for sorting any drawer Expanding wooden cutlery drawer, £19.95, Scotts of Stow





THE UNDERSHELF RACK

WHY WE LOVE IT: Double your storage by sliding it onto a shelf to use the space underneath. Ideal inside cupboards, but pretty enough to be seen, it's great for kitchens and offices Scandi undershelf storage rack, £17, Store





THE SUPERSIZE HOOK

WHY WE LOVE IT: Great for clearing floor space - these are strong enough to hold brooms and rakes, chairs, bikes and even ladders, with a foam sheath to prevent scraped paintwork

Garden furniture hooks, £9 each, Store



THE SMALL SORTER

WHY WE LOVE IT: All the loose bits that float around at the bottom of your 'random stuff' drawer belong in here. Also good for craft kit and small toys

A5 storage box with compartments, £5, Hema



THE MOVABLE HOOK

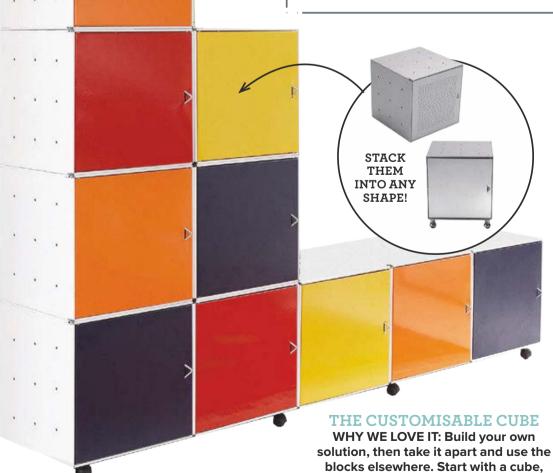
WHY WE LOVE IT: Pop it wherever you need it; move it as you like. It uses suction, so there are no screws and no sticky foam pads to contend with

Stugvik hooks, £6.50 for four, Ikea

then add optional doors and castors

Steel cubes, £49 each; coloured doors,

from £24 each; all The Holding Company





THE ULTIMATE MULTI-SYSTEM

WHY WE LOVE IT: Mix rails, panels, hooks and shelves in any combo, then change it as you need. Your under-stair storage will never be the same again...

Elfa hallway/cloakroom system, £209, Store



THE TROUSER HANGER

WHY WE LOVE IT: Five pairs on one hanger equals massive wardrobe space-saving, plus it has swing-out bars so you don't have to keep lifting it in and out. You can also use it for spools of tape and ribbons if you're a crafter Padded trouser hanger, £8.99, Lakeland



THE WHEELIE BIN

WHY WE LOVE IT: Designed for pet food, but could be used for bulk-buy dry goods, washing powder, Lego, ice grit or even coal for your open fire

Pet food storage container on castors, from £23.95 each, The Holding Company



THE FLIP HOOK

WHY WE LOVE IT: Great for tight spaces and on the back of doors - flips flat and looks sleek when closed

Bjarnum folding hooks, £9.50 for three, Ikea







THE CUPBOARD FILLER

WHY WE LOVE IT: Use the full height of your kitchen units with this interior shelf and stuff the grab-and-go boxes with loose packets and small jars

Shelf, £12.99; caddy stack caddies, £4.99 each; all Lakeland





THE SHOW-OFF STACKER

WHY WE LOVE IT: The sleek design of these boxes means that they can be put on show and those bamboo lids help them stack into a tidy tower

Orthex smart store plastic boxes, £5 each; bamboo lids, £5 each; all John Lewis



THE BIG LINEN PACKER

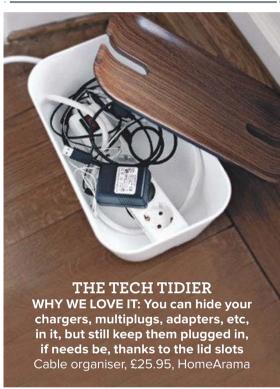
WHY WE LOVE IT: It's an essential, well-priced, moth-proof basic for storing out-of-season bedding and clothes in a loft or cupboard Brown Peva two-piece blanket storage set, £6.99, Argos





THE UNDER-BED WHEELIE

WHY WE LOVE IT: The wheels help it glide over bedroom carpet, while the split lids mean you only have to half-pull it out to grab what you need 50ltr wheeled plastic underbed storage boxes, £19.99 for two, Argos





THE CLUTTER CUBE

WHY WE LOVE IT: Keep one in the corner of the living room, kitchen and/ or hallway and just chuck all the abandoned toys, shoes and newspapers in it at the end of the day Felt storage bag, £8, Hema

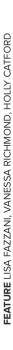


THE SECRET SHELVES

WHY WE LOVE IT: Makes the interior of any wardrobe or cupboard far more flexible to your storage needs

Neatfreak six-shelf organiser, £15, John Lewis





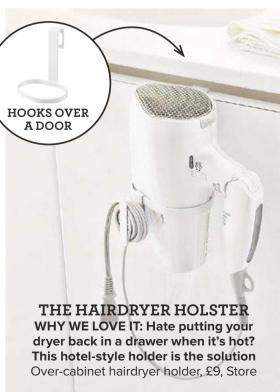




THE MULTIPURPOSE BOX

WHY WE LOVE IT: The sturdiest stacker we've found - and it has a ridge for holding suspension files

Really useful 35ltr plastic storage box, £12, B&Q





THE PEG RAIL

WHY WE LOVE IT: Peg rails of all kinds are indispensable, but this one has the edge because you can move the pegs and it has various pots, holders and accessories you can add PS 2014 wall rail with mirror

and pegs, £20, Ikea



THE ANYWHERE CADDY

WHY WE LOVE IT: Put it up (or stand it) wherever piles of stuff tend to grow Silver mesh pantry caddy, £8.95, Homearama



THE ROW OF BOXES

WHY WE LOVE IT: A set of three in a pretty, neutral design fits perfectly on top of a wardrobe or beneath a console to hold shoes, bags and outdoor gear

Non-woven storage boxes, £9.99 for three, Argos



Plum & white chocolate traybake

MAKES 15 SQUARES TAKES 20MIN PLUS 45MIN IN THE OVEN COSTS 71P PER SERVING

- 75g unsalted butter, plus extra for greasing ■ 200g white chocolate, broken into pieces
- 125g light muscovado sugar
- = 125g light muscovado sugar
- 3 eggs, plus 1 extra egg yolk ■ 175g self-raising flour ■ 250g ricotta ■ 65g caster sugar ■ 1tsp vanilla extract ■ 300g plums, pitted and cut into wedges
- 1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/ 375°F/Gas 5. Grease and line the base and sides of a shallow baking tin measuring 28cm x 20cm. 2 Melt the butter and chocolate in a pan. In a separate bowl, beat together the muscovado sugar, whole eggs and flour to make a paste. Stir in the melted chocolate and pour into the prepared tin. 3 Beat the ricotta with the sugar, egg yolk and vanilla, then spoon on top of the chocolate mixture. Use the end of a round-bladed knife to marble the two mixtures together lightly. Bake for 20min. 4 Distribute the plums on top and bake for a further 25min until set in the centre. Leave to cool in the tin before cutting into squares.

Look's tip

Use firm berries as they will hold their shape better



Berry blondies

MAKES 15 SQUARES TAKES 45MIN PLUS 2HR CHILLING COSTS 62P PER SERVING

- 125g butter, plus extra for greasing
 200g white chocolate, broken into pieces
 125g caster sugar
 3 eggs
 1tsp vanilla extract
 100g ground almonds
 150g self-raising flour
 150g white chocolate chunks
 100g blueberries
 100g raspberries
- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4. Line a 20cm x 30cm brownie tin with nonstick baking paper.
- 2 Heat the butter and 200g white chocolate in a bowl set over a pan of barely simmering water until just melted do not stir the mixture or let the bowl touch the water. Remove from the heat and leave to cool for 5min.

 3 Whisk the sugar, eggs and vanilla in a bowl until the mixture has doubled in volume. Sieve in the almonds and flour, then fold in the chocolate mix. Add 50g chocolate chunks and half

the berries, stir, then spoon into the tin. Top with the remaining berries and 50g of the chocolate chunks.

4 Put the brownie tin in the oven, then lay a sheet of foil loosely over the top, being careful not to let it touch the mixture. Bake for 30min until golden. Cool, then chill for 2hr in the tin.

Melt the remaining chocolate, drizzle onto the bake, then leave the chocolate to harden. Turn out and cut into squares.



MAKES 20 SQUARES TAKES 40 MIN PLUS COOLING TIME COSTS 36P PER SERVING

225g unsalted butter, plus extra for greasing × 275g dark chocolate, broken into small pieces 400g golden caster sugar ¹/₂tsp vanilla extract
¹/₂tsp vanilla extrac beaten 200g plain flour, sifted ■ Icing sugar, to dust

1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/ 350°F/Gas 4. Grease and line

a deep 20cm x 30cm baking tin with baking parchment.

2 In a saucepan, gently melt the dark chocolate with the butter. Remove from the heat and stir in the golden caster sugar and vanilla extract. Leave the chocolate mixture to cool down slightly. **3** When cooled, whisk the eggs in a little at a time, then carefully fold in the sifted plain flour and a pinch of salt until you have a smooth mixture. Pour into the prepared baking tin and put in the oven to bake for about 25min.

4 Remove the brownie from the oven and leave to cool completely. Turn out of the tin, cut the bake into 20 squares and dust with icing sugar to serve.

Cherry & pistachio traybake

MAKES 15 TAKES 10MIN PLUS 45MIN IN THE OVEN **COSTS** 67P PER SERVING

≥ 250g butter, plus extra for greasing ≥ 250g self-raising flour **■** 250g caster sugar

- ¥4 eggs ¥2tbsp milk ¥350g cherries, pitted and halved
- 100g pistachio nuts, chopped
- 10 sugar cubes, crushed

1 Preheat the oven to 190°C/ 375°F/Gas 5. Grease and line a 20cm x 30cm tin with baking parchment. Beat together the butter, flour, sugar, eggs and milk. Stir in three quarters of the cherries and pistachios, spoon the mixture into the tin and level the surface. 2 Top with the remaining cherries, pistachios and the sugar cubes, and press lightly into the mixture. **3** Bake in the centre of the oven for 35-45min until the cake is risen. golden and just firm to the touch. 4 Remove from the oven and turn out onto a wire tray. Allow to cool, then cut into 15 squares.



Cook's tip

Don't allow the flapjacks to overbake - they should be chewy, not rock solid

Apple & cinnamon flapjacks

MAKES 12 BARS TAKES 40MIN COSTS 45P PER SERVING

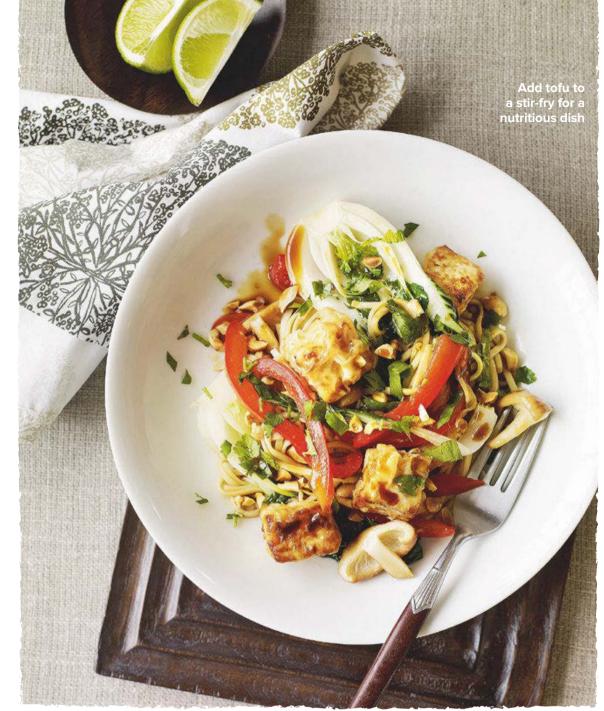
- 225g butter, plus extra for greasing **225**g caster sugar 🛚 175g golden syrup
- 450g porridge oats
- 2 eating apples, peeled, cored and chopped
- **■** ½tsp cinnamon
- 1 Preheat the oven to 180°C/350°F/Gas 4. Grease and line the base of a 20cm x 30cm cake tin with baking parchment.
- 2 Melt the butter, sugar and syrup in a pan, stirring until all the sugar has dissolved.
- **3** Remove from the heat, stir in the oats, chopped apple and cinnamon, then spread the mixture into the lined tin and bake for 30min until golden.
- **4** Leave until cold before turning out of the tin. Cut into bars and serve.



Try a new taste... SILKEN TOFU

Popular in Japanese, Chinese and Thai cooking, tofu is bean curd made from sova protein and is packed with amino acids, iron, calcium and B vitamins. Regular tofu and the creamier silken tofu come in soft. medium and firm consistencies - firm is best for stir-fries and grilled dishes.

HOW TO USE Heat 3tbsp sunflower oil in a pan. Toss 350g firm silken tofu chunks in 3tbsp seasoned flour and fry until golden and crisp - don't crowd the pan or the tofu will become soggy. Blot with kitchen paper and set aside. Heat 2tbsp sunflower oil in a wok until smoking hot. Add 1 sliced onion, 1 sliced red pepper, 150g sliced shiitake mushrooms and 4tbsp teriyaki sauce. After a few min, add 8 halved baby pak choi, 250g cooked ramen noodles and the tofu. Stir in the juice of 2 limes, some chopped fresh coriander and crushed toasted peanuts. Serve with extra lime wedges.





LOOK WHAT WE FOUND!

Keep your kitchen running like clockwork with this magnetic railway-style timer

Eddinatons areen retro magnetic kitchen timer (diameter 7.5cm), Flavour of Yorkshire range, National Railway Museum



IDEAL V GREAT DEAL

Bake fresh bread at home with one of these machines



Rising star This compact design has 12 settings and allows for two different loaf sizes

Small Space bread machine. Lakeland



Wake up to the smell of fresh bread thanks to the overnight program

Cookworks XBM1128 bread maker, Argos



Grow something beautiful...

SALVIAS

Valued for their brilliant colour options and long flowering time, salvias are a great choice for sunny areas in the garden. There are hundreds of varieties in a kaleidoscope of lovely hues – some are hardy, while others will need greenhouse protection over winter.

HOW TO GROW Plant between May and August in well-drained soil that gets lots of sun. If you don't have the right conditions, plant by a sunny wall or in pots on the patio. Try a mix of varieties and combine with grasses, Verbena bonariensis, penstemons and silver foliage. Salvias don't need feeding and thrive in poor soil. Prune after the first flush of flowers and cut back in spring. Pot up a few to overwinter in a greenhouse or sheltered spot, in case those left out don't survive the winter.



VARIETIES TO TRY

BEST FOR

Salvia x jamensis 'Hot Lips'



This half-hardy perennial has aromatic foliage with a blackcurrant scent and eye-catching bicolour blooms. Patio pots or borders. As the colour has a tropical intensity, it goes well with exotic-looking foliage, too.

Salvia nemorosa



A compact and hardy variety that's hard to beat for impact. It has iridescent purple spires from June to October.

Attracting bees and butterflies to your border. It also makes a great edging plant and works well in gravel gardens.

Salvia curviflora



The candy-pink blooms flower from late spring until autumn. It grows in sun or part shade and likes moist, welldrained soil. Colourful impact in a woodland-style garden or by an entrance. A good choice for containers with some shade.

LOOK WHAT WE FOUND!

Keep your tools close at hand with this gardening bag. A big compartment and six pockets provide plenty of room for a trowel, string and a notebook.

Gardening bag, Gisela Graham range, Mollie & Fred



Weekend project

WITH ROSEMARY ALEXANDER



Most bulbs can be grown in garden soil or in containers,

and they should be ordered now.

Highly scented and with a good vase life, daffodils flower in March and April. Avoid the trumpet daffodil and go for more refined *Triandus* types, such as *N*. 'Hawera' or 'Thalia', which cope with light shade or full sun. Tulips follow in late April or May; lily-flowered varieties perform from early May. The vibrant orange *T*. 'Ballerina' clashes brilliantly with *T*.



'China Pink'. Tulips can be left until November to plant.

Rosemary
Alexander VMM
(RHS) is principal
of the English
Gardening School
at the Chelsea
Physic Garden



Scooba® Floor Scrubbing Robot

Automatically scrubs your hard floors for a germ-free clean

The Scooba Floor Scrubbing Robot removes dirt, stuck-on grime and up to 99.3% of bacteria.

Available at













DEBENHAMS





FACT! 62% of people over 55 wash their sheets every week, but less than half of 16-24 year olds do



Outdoor oven, Fornetto

This wood-fired beauty cooks everything from ciabatta to chicken

FEATURES WE LOVE

Pizza stone This smart-looking steel \perp and ceramic-brick oven comes with a pizza stone, so you can bake an authentic crispy-based margherita in minutes or rustle up your own flatbreads.

Smoker facility You can use it to \triangle smoke fish, meat and more – just add smoked wood chips soaked in water to the removable smoker box, and it will

keep food moist while infusing it with tasty flavours, such as hickory, apple or maple.

 Warming ability Not just a brilliant Oven, this will give off enough radiant heat to keep you warm all year round, so you could even dine alfresco in winter.

Handy extras There's a condiment rack, plus a lift-up table where you can put hot dishes that have come straight out of the oven or food ready for cooking.

Family favourite

Smarter and more versatile than its predecessors, this redesigned classic grill has a deep bake pan that lets you cook omelettes, pizza or even a small stew, and a sear button that gives 90 seconds of 260°C heat, so you can brown meat and fish. Its stainand fade-resistant ceramic plates are dishwasher safe and it's still got that trademark slope that draws away fat and grease to make healthier dinners.

George Foreman Evolve grill, Argos





FACT! Watching films in 3D can increase the processing power of your brain by 23%

IDEAL HOME TRAVEL VIDEAL HOME TRAVEL





LAKE COMO, ST MORITZ & THE BERNINA EXPRESS

Take in stunning Lake Como and experience one of Europe's most scenic train journeys through the Alps.

SELECTED DEPARTURES UNTIL OCTOBER 2015 AND APRIL TO OCTOBER 2016. THE PRICE INCLUDES

- Return flights, taxes and transfers
- Seven nights in hand-picked four-star hotels, with half board
- Comprehensive sightseeing, including St Moritz, the incredible Bernina Express rail journey and Lake Maggiore
- A lake cruise to stunning Bellagio and a private visit to Villa del Balbianello and its beautiful gardens
- An experienced tour manager

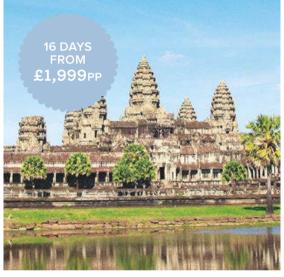


SOUTH AFRICA

Make this the year that you pay a visit to gorgeous, vibrant South Africa.

SELECTED DEPARTURES OCTOBER 2015 AND JANUARY TO NOVEMBER 2016. THE PRICE INCLUDES

- **Return flights**, taxes and transfers
- Stays in excellent three- and four-star hotels with breakfast, including two lunches and three dinners
- **Sightseeing** including Kruger National Park, Isandlwana and Rorke's Drift, the Garden Route, Swaziland and whale watching in Hermanus*
- A visit to the winelands with a cellar tour
- An optional overnight stay in a tented safari camp
- An experienced **tour manager** to escort you



VIETNAM & CAMBODIA

Take our escorted tour and see beautiful Phnom Penh and the ancient city of Angkor.

SELECTED DEPARTURES OCTOBER AND NOVEMBER 2015 AND JANUARY TO NOVEMBER 2016. THE PRICE INCLUDES

- Return flights, taxes and transfers
- Stays in **four- and five-star hotels** with breakfast, plus five meals
- **Sightseeing** including the French colonial city of Phnom Penh and the ancient city and temples of Angkor in Cambodia, as well as Hanoi, the capital of Vietnam, by cycle rickshaw
- A cruise through Halong Bay and a visit to the Forbidden City in Hue
- A stay in Ho Chi Minh, formerly Saigon, including a visit to the Cu Chi tunnels
- An experienced tour manager to escort you



POMPEII, CAPRI & THE BAY OF NAPLES

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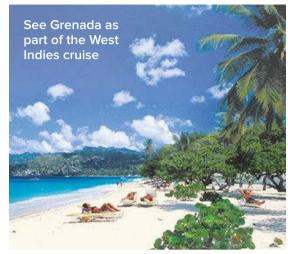






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You'll love this...

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You'll hardly hear this muted machine as it works its magic tackling your loads of laundry



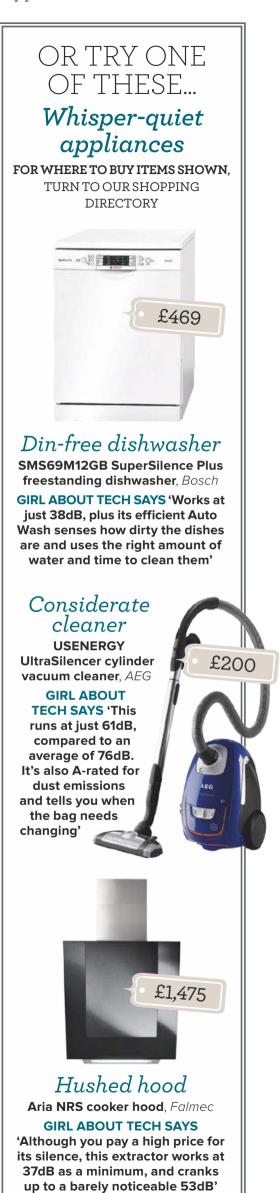
Does your washing machine sound like it's taking off? Then this new model will be music to your ringing ears. It reaches just 66dB on a spin, whereas most hit 78dB - big news given that a 6dB drop is perceived as roughly a halving of loudness. ٣ What's more, the water and

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GIRL ABOUT TECH

TECHNOLOGY EDITOR AND BLOGGER





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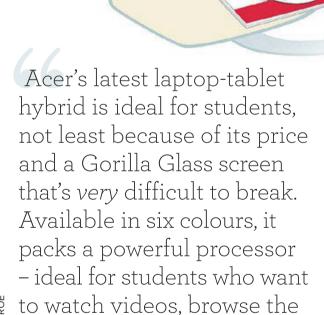
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GIRL ABOUT TECH,

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Into the fold

Satellite Radius 11.6in convertible laptop, Toshiba

GIRL ABOUT TECH SAYS 'Instead

of a detachable keyboard, a 360° hinge lets the screen fold back

into five positions. Battery life

could be better, but it has a

bigger display at a bargain price'

Girl About Tech explains... Clothing care

Make sure you have the right gadgets to keep your new-season wardrobe in tiptop shape

WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?

I'm sure I'm not the only one that has a dry-clean-only top languishing at the bottom of my laundry basket, or a dress I'd wear far more if it didn't need ironing. Nor am I the first to have the colour run from new jeans, wrecking the whole wash. Well I can't be because, according to recent surveys, 27% of our clothes go unworn because we can't be bothered to press them*, and we'll damage £3,969 worth of garments over a lifetime of washing.**

WHY SHOULD YOU WORRY?

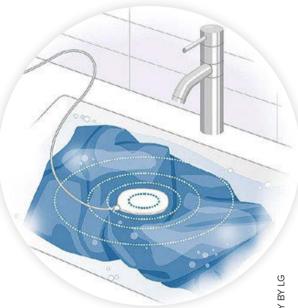
Just like it's worth investing in a trusty LBD, buying a few gadgets to take care of your outfits will save you money in the long term. Let's start with washing machines - older models aren't only less energy efficient and, therefore, more expensive to run, they aren't necessarily designed with delicate clothes in mind, either. For example, a new model may pre-mix detergent with water and air bubbles before injecting it into the drum, so that it's more evenly distributed and lessens the chance of 'raw' detergent staining your clothes. It may also have a drum with smaller holes that clothes can't catch on, or special Woolmarkapproved cycles that take extra care of woolly jumpers and cashmere cardis.

Irons have also had a bit of a makeover of late - those with one 'optimal' temperature setting allow you move from one item to the next without worrying that the iron is too hot and might scorch the fabric. Some manufacturers are even daring to forget about traditional appliances and are coming up with new, gentle ways to get our clothes clean, with everything from a hi-tech 'wave-forming' pebble to a state-of-the-art washing wardrobe.





The latest irons automatically adjust to the right heat setting as they come into contact with different fabrics. These smart models come in two forms standard steam irons and steam generators, which have a separate water tank that creates pressurised steam (as used by dry-cleaners) to smooth out creases quickly. This powerful steam is so good at flattening fabric that you can typically do the ironing in half the time, since you only need to press one side of a garment.



CHECK OUT SOMETHING JBRAND NEW

There are all sorts of innovative products launching – take the Dolfi. Just fill the sink with water, add washing powder and this 'pebble' creates ultrasonic waves to remove the dirt from vour clothes. Available through IndieGoGo, it costs \$109 (around £68) plus \$25 (£16) shipping.

FEATURE AMY CUTMORE ILLUSTRATIONS MONIKA ROE ACCORDING TO A SURVEY BY LG



PICK A CARING **APPLIANCE**

Many new washing machines put the emphasis on looking after clothes. Drums in the latest Panasonic models have smaller dimples, so there's nothing for fabrics to catch on, while some machines – like those from Samsung and AEG – pre-mix the detergent with water before spraying it onto laundry. This means the water doesn't need to be as hot, so clothes are less likely to shrink and there won't be any undissolved detergent, which can stain. Finally, although they can be pricey, consider a machine with a steam cycle to refresh dry-clean-only clothes without detergent.

RETHINK THE ±WARDROBE

Currently only available in Asia, LG's Styler offers a glimpse into the laundry of the future. Pop clothes inside this love child of a wardrobe and a washing machine, and various programmes will quickly refresh your clothes with steam or give them a 90-minute 'sanitary clean'.



SKIP IRONING WITH A STEAMER

Are you the type of person whose hatred of ironing borders on pathological? Never iron your bedding, let alone your towels? Then get yourself a garment steamer. Ideal for any outfits too creased to get away with wearing, it can also refresh clothes including dry-clean-only items that have been worn just once. Compact models have a water tank built into the steam head, but these will only be able to steam one or two garments at a time. Larger steamers consist of a hand-held steam head, attached via a hose to a water tank - they often come with a telescopic hanging rack with clips that will hold your clothes in place as you steam them. Also, look out for fabric-brush attachments to use on thicker clothes and upholstery.





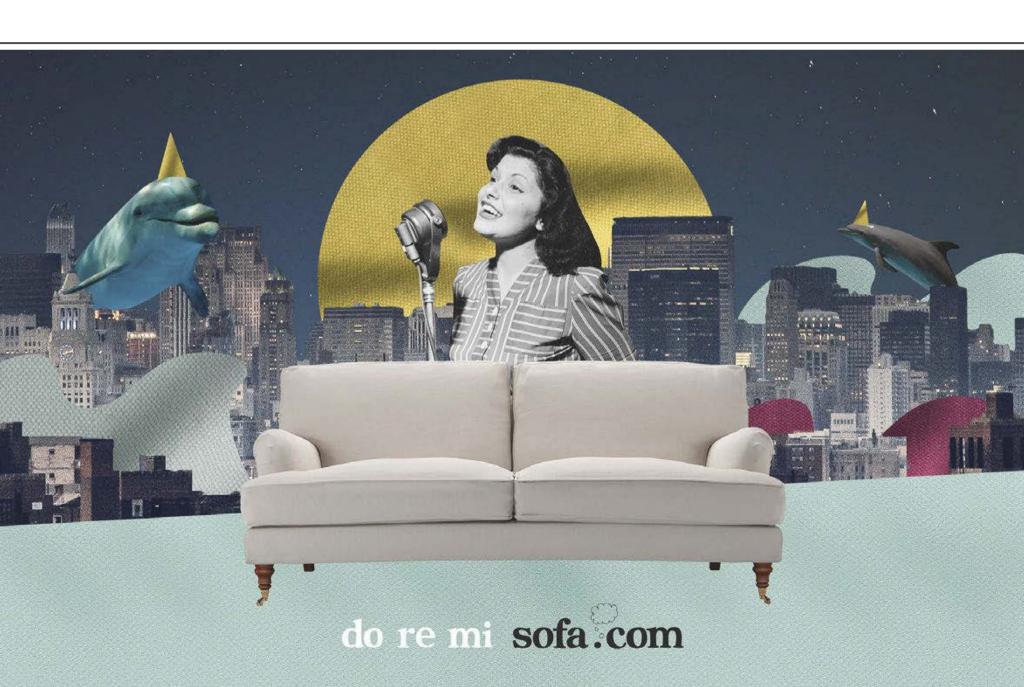
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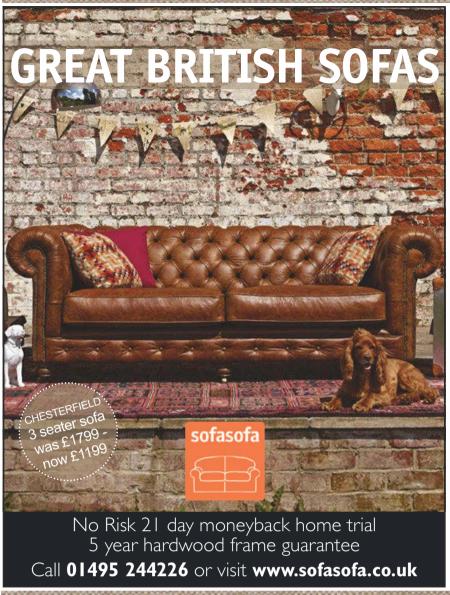
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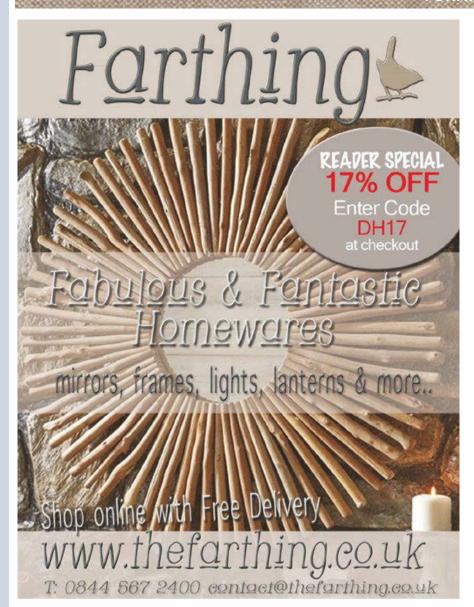
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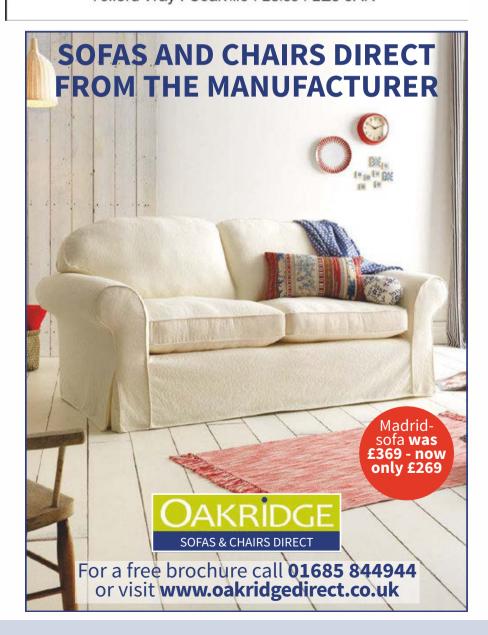
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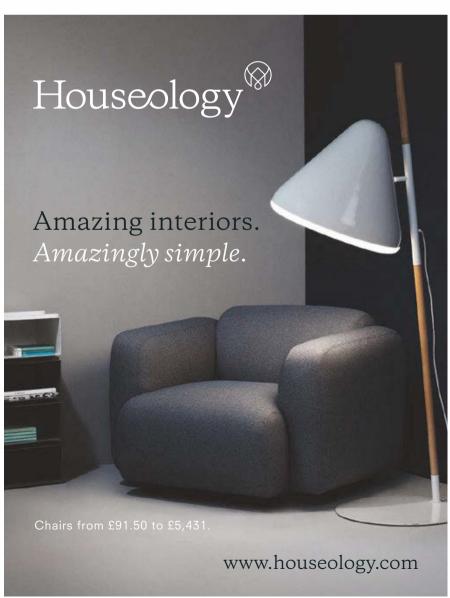




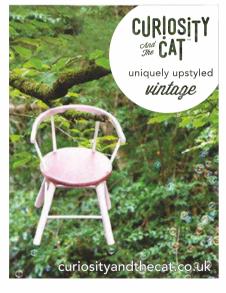
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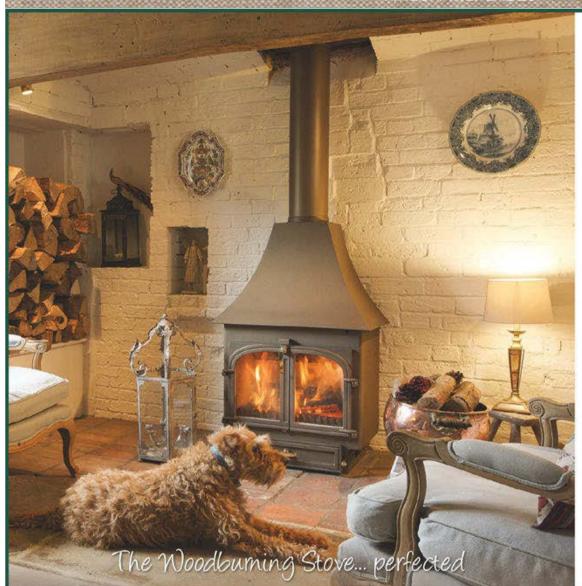






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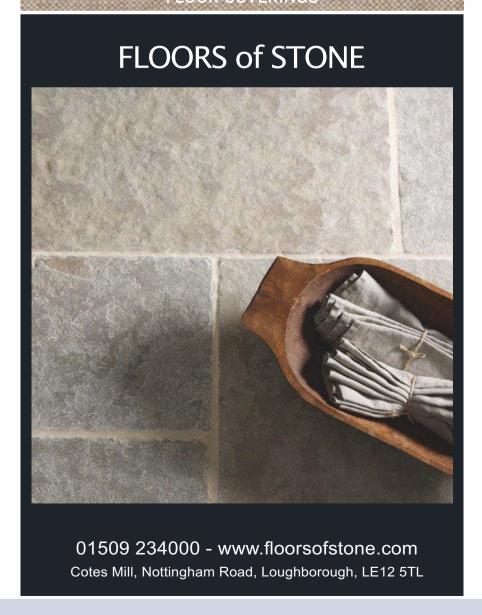


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Enjoy spring and summer colour with these bulbs, which trended at this year's Chelsea Flower Show

CAMASSIA 'MAYBELLE This compact cultivar flowers in late spring. The buds at the bottom open first, with those at the top flowering up to a month later. It's a good choice for heavier soils in sun or partial shade. Plant 10-15cm deep, 23cm apart, in groups of five or more. Leave the plants undisturbed for several years for the best blooms. After that, offsets can be removed and replanted in late summer or early autumn. **PLANT September-October BUY £6.50** for five, Avon Bulbs (01460 242177; avonbulbs.co.uk)

NARCISSUS 'OAKWOOD' An award-winning variety, this I flowers in March and April, and has a smaller-than-average yellow cup. At about 40cm tall, it's a good choice for pots and borders. Plant the bulbs in fertilised soil in a sunny spot with good drainage, in holes that are three times the height of the bulb (about 15-18cm). After flowering, cut off the spent flowers and feed with a sprinkling of bone-meal fertiliser. **PLANT September**

BUY £10 for 10, Walkers Bulbs (01406 426216; bulbs.co.uk)



TULIP 'FOUNTAINEBLEAU' Admired for its striking maroon blooms, which have a wide white margin at their edges, this mid-season tulip has a chocolate aroma. Just 15cm tall, it's a great choice for patio pots. Wearing gloves, plant bulbs 15-20cm deep and 10-15cm apart in fertile, well-drained soil, or a finger width apart in pots. Apply liquid tomato feed weekly for the first month. Deadhead when blooms fade. **PLANT September-**December BUY £6.60 for 10, Bloms Bulbs (01234

LILIUM 'TWYFORD'

709099; blomsbulbs.com)

This pollen-free double Oriental $oldsymbol{\mathsf{L}}$ lily made the shortlist for RHS Plant of the Year 2015. Plant in a sunny, sheltered spot with welldrained acidic soil. lining 20cm-deep holes with grit to improve

drainage. For impact, plant bulbs in clusters, allowing 20-25cm

between them. Alternatively, grow in pots of ericaceous compost. The heavy blooms will need staking when they appear.

PLANT September-October BUY £5.25 for three (plus p&p), HW Hyde (07557 530845; hwhyde.co.uk)

One of a range of new irises from America, its flowers have dark-plum outer petals (known as 'falls') that soften in colour around violet beards. and old gold falls that are washed with lilac. These drought-tolerant plants grow from rhizomes rather than bulbs. These

need to be baked by the sun to produce flowers, so plant in a well-drained, sunny place, facing the sun, and leave them half exposed on the surface of the soil. Over time, irises form clumps and flowering can suffer from overcrowding, so lift the plants in late summer and discard the old centre of the clump, replanting only the young outer pieces that have a fresh fan of leaves.

PLANT Now until mid-October BUY £8 each, Claire Austin (01686 670342; claireaustin-hardyplants.co.uk)

GLADIOLI 'PRIMA VERDE' A vibrant option, this new gladiolus has spikes of funnelshaped, green-yellow flowers, with a red throat and fine purple stripes in the open florets. Plant at fortnightly intervals to produce a succession of flowers, which can be cut for the vase from July to October. Grow in a sunny site with well-drained, fertile soil. If grown for cutting, dip the corms in fungicide before planting 10-15cm deep and 15-20cm apart on a layer of coarse sand. Stake the plants, putting the cane on the opposite side to the buds. Lift, dry and store the corms in autumn. **PLANT March-May BUY** Order now for delivery in 2016. £4.50 for 10, Pheasant Acre Plants (01656 664086;

pheasantacreplants.co.uk)

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